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## THE WAR.

A FORTNIGHT, though it forms an imperceptible point in the backward perspective of history, occupies a large space in the eager eyes which are scrutinizing its meaning while it is close at hand. Diplomacy and war have alike kept their secret for a time, unless the statement of a German paper, that Russia and France have made arrangements for the defeat of Austria may be regarded as a confirmation of the rumours which still command general belief. Newspaper writers in England, naturally impatient for matter to publish and discuss, already censure the traditional slowness of Austria, and point out the contrast between the leisurely movements of the army and the precipitate rupture with Sardinia. The popular system of military criticism seems to be borrowed from the well-known method by which biographers and historians of a certain school add piquancy to their delineations of character. The rhetorical artifice consists in the application to any individual case of a general formula which will not cover the special instance; and the ingenuity of the author is shown in selecting a rule with an exclusive view to a foreseen exception. Thus it may be asserted that GEORGE BARNWELL was the most just and benevolent of mankind; but, to use Lord MACAULAY'S favourite phrase, "such is the inconsistency of human nature" that he robbed and murdered his uncle. On the same principle a prophecy that the Austrian army was about to seize Turin prepares the way for a complaint that "such is the inconsistency of Count GYULAI'S strategy" as to have prevented him from making any such attempt. Ordinary spectators, if they had witnessed a sudden march on the capital, would have assumed that the operation, although it might seem unintelligible, was justified by some adequate military reason. The less showy and less definite manœuvres which have formed the actual commencement of the campaign admit at least as readily of a conjectural explanation.

It was probably impossible to strike a decisive blow against the Piedmontese army before the arrival of the French reinforcements, nor would the Austrian general have been justified in forming the siege of Alessandria or Casale with the knowledge that he might in a few days be overwhelmed by superior numbers. His immediate object can at best be vaguely inferred from that portion of his movements which is known. The main body of the army has maintained itself since the commencement of the war in the enemy's country, on the right bank of the Ticino, perhaps with no ulterior purpose; and when the allies eventually advance they will derive but little advantage from the resources of Novara, of Lomellina, and of Vercelli. Count GYULAI has thus far confined himself to his own side of the great river; and although an equal or superior force occupies the long line from Genoa to Turin and Ivrea, his front and flank are probably secure for the time against any decisive attack. An army moving on Milan would be held in check by the garrison of Piacenza, and for the present all the wealth of Lombardy is at the command of the army which occupies the left bank of the Po. All the belligerents are in truth holding their natural positions, nor is it possible at the present moment to calculate the future fortunes of a campaign which has scarcely commenced. The Austrian line of retreat, with its parallel rivers protecting the road to the great square of the four fortresses, must be contemplated by the most daring enemy with hesitation and respect. The superiority of numbers will be found on the side of the assailants, and the military qualities of all the armies may be regarded as equal. The event seems to depend on the ability of the respective commanders, and it is a remarkable circumstance that, if a great general is to be found on the Continent, his merits are still unknown. BARAGUAY D'HILLIERS has done

nothing; CANROBERT has displayed utter incapacity for chief command; GYULAI has only been known as a competent staff officer; and LA MARMORA had no opportunity of displaying in the Crimea the ability which he is supposed to possess. Baron HESS, who has been said to be the sole living officer who could manœuvre 200,000 men, has passed his seventieth year, and for the present he remains at Vienna. The King of SARDINIA, undoubtedly a gallant and daring soldier, has served only in campaigns which were as remarkable for mismanagement as for heroism; and the Emperor NAPOLEON, whose personal courage and general capacity are beyond dispute, has never had the means of knowing whether he possesses the special aptitudes which are required in war. As the present state of Europe has been principally brought about for the purpose of facilitating the experiment, the result will be watched with considerable curiosity, if not with ardent sympathy. It is by no means improbable that the fortune of the BONAPARTE dynasty, and the future history of France, may depend on the skill and success of the approaching campaign. Several great generals have been born in the purple, and others have entered without preparation on high military commands as an accident of their political position; but in war, as in all other trials of human ability, failure is far more common than triumph. The late Emperor of RUSSIA, after a lifetime spent in playing at soldiers, was forced to admit that nature had denied him the gift of military command. His Western imitator cannot so well afford to fall back on his absolute power if he finds that his genius is ill-suited for the field. The historiographer who is characteristically summoned to follow in the Imperial suite will scarcely be able to suppress the decision of that Fortune which his nomination seems to challenge and defy.

There are obvious strategic reasons for placing a strong Austrian force at Ancona, and it may also have been thought necessary to counterbalance in the Ecclesiastical States the influence exercised by the French garrison of Rome. The Papal army will add little strength to either party in the war, but there may be an advantage in making use, as long as possible, of the resources of any Italian province which is still overawed and controlled. The Austrian Government has probably foreseen that the French wolf would take the opportunity to pick a quarrel with the Papal lamb on the pretext of a violation of neutrality; but when war has once broken out, military considerations become paramount, and the position of the French at Rome is too anomalous to last. The Government which has disturbed the peace of the world for the alleged purpose of reforming the administration of Central Italy, can scarcely persevere in maintaining by force of arms the irresponsible misgovernment of the POPE. The political position of Naples is probably watched by the belligerents with eager anxiety, for the death of the KING may possibly bring over to the Italian side a well-appointed army of 80,000 men. The inexperienced heir to the throne will find it easier to comply with the popular demand than to bear the brunt of the Muratist conspiracies which may any day be expected to explode. There is little to fear from the remote resentment of Austria, in comparison with the presence of domestic discontent, and with the formidable hostility of France. It is highly desirable that the adhesion of Naples to the national cause should be unattended by revolution; and half the dangers which impend over Europe might be averted if Italy were to become strong enough to maintain her own independence without the unwelcome aid of a foreign and suspected ally.

It is useless to speculate on the designs of Russia, and it only remains for England and Germany to frustrate by their preparations the policy of unfriendly and aggressive Powers. The declarations of diplomatists will be estimated at their true value, while a steady watch is kept on the symptoms

which are likely to indicate the development of the conspiracy. If fleets are equipped and increased there will be presumptive proof of designs against England, and the signal of attack will probably be given by disturbances in the Turkish dominions. The neutrality which is prescribed by circumstances, and adopted with universal consent, will not be "disquieting" except to those who may contemplate anything rather than quiet courses. It is not improbable that Russia, before taking any decisive step, will wait to see the progress of the Italian war, which at present offers the prospect of a lingering and indecisive campaign. All who desire the early restoration of peace ought to welcome any postponement of a general European convulsion. The Austrians are likely to remain stationary behind the Po and the Sesia, and their adversaries can scarcely be as yet sufficiently provided with stores, artillery, and means of carriage. It is yet possible that the belligerents may find, by the experience of a local and limited war, that it is not altogether desirable to extend the conflagration to the rest of Europe.

#### THE ROMAN CATHOLICS AND LORD DERBY.

**D**URING the recent elections the constituencies have preserved in a very remarkable degree their established and traditional character. Few new men have come forward—few new ideas have been started. In one quarter alone has there been a movement at once general and new. The Roman Catholics have gone with Lord DERBY. Zealous converts have been set on to wage unsparing war against the Liberals, and letters have been despatched from ecclesiastical dignitaries intimating that the blessing of the Church would go with the adherents of the existing Government. In the great contest for the West Riding, it will, we believe, appear, when the poll-books are examined, that almost all the Yorkshire Roman Catholics supported Mr. STUART WORTLEY; and great, though not very successful, efforts have been made in Ireland by the priestly party to oust Liberal Roman Catholics and return Derbyites. The ostensible cause of gratitude is that Lord DERBY has promised that Roman Catholic gaol chaplains shall be put on the pleasantest possible footing. But as there is no Ministry that would not have made this very small bid for such valuable assistance, no one can doubt that there is some much deeper cause at work. Nor is there any real attempt to conceal what the cause is. The Roman Catholics support Lord DERBY because he is supposed to be favourable to Austria.

As France also is a Catholic country—as LOUIS NAPOLEON has courted the priests, and every pulpit in France has been ringing for the last five or six years with praises of the man who has restored the holy altars of religion—it might be supposed that Rome would be content that her two faithful children should at least fight their battles out on a fair field. But this is not so. She does not disguise that she blesses Austria; and that, if she does not thunder, she at least murmurs, an anathema against France. The Catholic party in neutral countries is entirely on the side of Austria. In England and Ireland they have made a crusade in favour of Lord DERBY; and in Continental countries, where they cannot give political aid, they give money. In Belgium, more especially, the priests make it a point of religious duty with their flocks that they shall invest their savings in the Austrian funds; and so thoroughly has this succeeded, that in many parts of the country a devotee buys *metaliques* as a matter of course, directly he has accumulated a hundred or two of francs. Austria, in fact, represents what may be termed the permanent policy of Rome. She is governed as Rome wishes that a State should be governed. There is, indeed, only one great difference between the Government of the Papal States themselves and the Government of Austria. The latter, being a lay State, is permitted to have an army that may really shed blood, and get hold of all the good things that come within its reach. There is thus a powerful profession eclipsing in wealth and importance the ecclesiastical body, there is the means of effectually repressing commotion, and there is the instrument as well as the necessity of governing on a large scale. But the whole theory of government is the same as that which wears the Romagna into hopeless misery. Austria is an ecclesiastical Government, tempered by the existence of a predominant lay profession, and by all the excellences that attach to government when its vastness and complexity make some degree of prudence and compromise a matter of absolute necessity in administering it. In Austria, Rome

has got all that she wants. There is a Concordat which places all the local clergy at the mercy of the Papal See. The Jesuits are triumphant. Education is carried exactly to that point which enables the masses to comprehend slightly, but not to criticise in the least, the tenets of the Church. Heretics are treated with that contemptuous severity which is the proper lot of men who are fools in this world, and will be damned in the next. Seven hundred thousand bayonets are ready to force any dogma down the throat of any recusant. Austria is the Abdiel of Catholic States. In all others there is some taint on the fidelity with which they cleave to the Church. But Austria is perfectly faithful and perfectly obedient, and she is big enough and strong enough to make her docility a great credit to those in behalf of whom it is exercised. When, therefore, she has to fight, it is natural that the blessings and prayers of all good Catholics should go with her.

France stands in a very different relation to Rome. There is a large and a powerful Catholic party in France who feel towards Rome as Austria feels; but they only influence the government of France—they do not exercise it; and, except during the time of CHARLES X., they never have exercised it since the Revolution. France behaves to Rome as a lay Power obliged to coquet with an ecclesiastical system; and Rome behaves to France as an ecclesiastical body obliged to coquet with a strong, cunning, irreverential layman. Whoever has seen a clerical corporation trying to screw a larger fine out of a farming tenant—who, on his side, is secretly sure that he can do the parsons—has a very fair notion of the standing relations of Rome and France. The ordinary Frenchman who plays at dominoes, and sips his half-glasses of indifferent brandy, has a profound feeling of hatred for two sorts of persons—noblemen and priests. He is always ready to go off into a fit of blasphemy and exhortation if it is hinted that he is really governed by the priests. And yet he knows that it is necessary to humour the caste he despises. So long as he feels reasonably sure that the individuals who compose the Government utterly disbelieve in the clerical system, he thinks it rather good fun to see them paying outward court to it. LOUIS NAPOLEON has excited much less ill-will by all the concessions he has made to the priests, than his predecessors awakened by the grant of much smaller favours, because it is thought that the origin of his Government being revolutionary, all his advances to the priests must be either hollow or treacherous. As a well-known Imperialist lately remarked to a friend who urged the danger of doing so much to please the clergy, "It makes no matter what we do for religion, *nous n'y croyons pas*." And there is nothing which the writers in the more Republican section of the Ministerial papers enjoy so much as making kind arrangements for the future of the POPE. It gives them the opportunity of seeming to be so pleasant and goodnatured to his Holiness, and it gratifies their vanity to think that they exercise for his welfare the immense superiority which their disbelief in him gives them. Sometimes he is to be kept at Rome on a precarious allowance; sometimes he is to be sent with a few cardinals to Elba; but the grand project is to settle him at Jerusalem. Cheered with such fancies as these, they are quite willing that their rulers should give the Papal Government, as at present established, a temporary assistance. General GOYON probably feels that there is something rather absurd in his having to put down the enthusiasm of the Romans when they shout in honour of France and the EMPEROR; but both he and his soldiers would make no scruple in shooting a lover of France who persisted in expressing his affection publicly. The policy of supporting the POPE as long as it can be useful to support him is accepted as in the highest degree intelligible and satisfactory.

The POPE, on the other hand, coquets with France. The time is come, indeed, when the Ecclesiastical Government is obliged to make many very sad concessions in its dealings with the outward world. It is true that it sometimes consoles itself by puny acts of revenge on its own subjects. During the last few years, while PIUS IX. was on the politest terms with M. ROTHSCHILD, his great creditor and temporal factotum, an old law has been revived at Ancona, making it punishable for a Christian to converse in a public place with a Jew. But with a Power like France the best bargain possible must be made; and many bargains are struck in a very curious spirit of compromise. It is said, for instance, that 25,000 copies of M. ABOUT's new book are to be permitted to enter France, and that afterwards it is to be prohibited as dangerous and irreligious. And, as it often happens, the open demonstrations



of friendship and respect are much more strong when Rome has to do with France than when she has to do with Austria. The same papers that inform us that the POPE would not be permitted to retire again to Gaeta, now that the eldest son of the Church had sent his troops to protect him at Rome, also tell us that the Papal Government regrets and laments the perverse audacity of Austria in violating what is diplomatically called the neutrality of Ancona. Austria is reproved, and France is humoured and flattered. But neither the POPE nor any of his Ministers forget for a moment that this new friend may soon be their enemy. In a few days it will be exactly fifty years since an Imperial decree was proclaimed at Rome, of which the first article was, "The Papal territory is united with the French Empire;" and the Government of Rome knows that the nephew of the man who decreed this annexation would be very likely to imitate his uncle's example if he could but persuade himself it was safe to do so. So far as the protestations of the lip go, so far as written messages of love and official blessings have any value, Rome is friendly, and almost more than friendly, to France. But she treats Austria in a very different way. Openly she does not scruple to be a little blunt with a tried and trusty friend who will be sure to understand her, but secretly she uses all her resources and puts in play all her elaborate machinery to render Austria substantial service. Lord DERBY is thought, rightly or wrongly, to be more friendly to Austria than his opponents would be, and, as a recompense for this friendly feeling, he has been aided at the polling-booths with all the support that the leaders of the Roman Catholics can command.

#### THE FUTURE OF SARDINIA.

THE prospects of Sardinia are overcast with the very blackness of darkness. There is a cordial understanding between England and freedom which is likely to be preferred to all alliances, and to survive all conflicts, and this may preserve to the Piedmontese a friend who will not allow their country to be absolutely blotted from the map of Europe; but the Sardinia which will emerge from the Austrian war cannot possibly be the Sardinia which we knew a year ago. An Austrian victory, or a series of Austrian successes, would probably simplify her destinies. The pressure of the neutral Powers might prevent the conqueror from depriving her of her national existence, but she could only hope to exist as Parma and Modena exist—a mere satellite in the Austro-Italian system. Her relation to the Austrian Empire would differ from that in which she stood during the reigns of CHARLES ALBERT's two immediate predecessors, only in being much more hopeless and infinitely more abject.

The situation in which Sardinia would be left by the expulsion of the Austrians from Lombardy is less easily defined; but whatever it be, it must be one in which a nation of freemen can take no interest. The Kingdom of Northern Italy, with VICTOR EMMANUEL at its head, would be about as valuable a member of the European system as was the first NAPOLEON's Kingdom of Etruria. The marriage of Prince NAPOLEON to the Sardinian Princess was the first stage, and the Austrian war is the second, in the descent of VICTOR EMMANUEL to the most humiliating position which human being can occupy—that of a royal cadet of the BONAPARTE family. What LOUIS was in Holland, JOSEPH in Spain, and JEROME in Westphalia, will VICTOR EMMANUEL be in the ancient dominions of his House. He will receive Lombardy, which will form the largest part of his territory, on precisely the same terms on which they received their apanages, and he will virtually agree to hold his whole kingdom by the same tenure. It is vain to hope that Sardinia, with any appendages which the war may give her, will be allowed to keep her interests and her administration separate from that of France. There is a natural impossibility in such an arrangement. A semi-dependent kingdom is only a degree removed from the situation of a French province, and the centralizing bias which has destroyed all vitality in one only needs time to be fatal to independence in the other. French Governments could not restore life to French departments, even if they tried to do it; and it will be found that, however sincerely desirous to observe the decencies of international law, the French Foreign Office will inevitably dictate its policy to the King of Northern Italy. The gradual abasement of an ally into a vassal or a subject occurred, fifty or sixty years since, in every case where French armies entered foreign countries on pretexts similar to those which are now put forward. French generals, when they

marched into Holland and Savoy, proclaimed themselves allies of the people. When they overran Germany, they professed friendship for the petty sovereigns. But Holland and Savoy became French departments, and the feeble German monarchs were reserved for a fate which in all probability exactly represents the future of Sardinia. The Kings of Saxony and Bavaria received large additions of territory at the expense of the more powerful enemies of France; nor is there reason to believe that NAPOLEON was consciously insincere in his guarantee of their independence. Yet in a few years their foreign affairs were entirely regulated in Paris; their territorial boundaries were disregarded; their commercial system was repeatedly altered at the pleasure of the EMPEROR; and hosts of their subjects, without a chance of glory, were marched away to die in his service amid the mud of Poland and the snows of Russia.

Count CAVOUR has deliberately preferred the expulsion of the Austrians from Italy to the peaceable development of Italian freedom. But the Germans are not the only foreigners whom Italy has cause to detest. When her foot is once planted on Italian soil, France will occupy the exact position which Austria will have been compelled to desert. She will be as hostile to Italian unity and as unfriendly to Italian liberty, while at the same time she will be less conscious of weakness, and far more difficult to dislodge. Every foreigner who enjoys sovereignty or suzerainty over a portion of the Peninsula, has the same interest as the Austrians in preventing Italy from submitting herself to a single Government. From CHARLES VIII. to NAPOLEON I., French invaders of Italy have carefully provided for the parcelling her out into small principalities, so long as it was not possible or convenient to convert her into a dependency of their own. The success of Italy in uniting herself into a single independent State would, in fact, be the severest blow which can be imagined to the power and influence of France in Europe; and it is downright madness in Italian statesmen to suppose that their patron would countenance a policy which would blacken his memory for ever in the esteem of his fellow-countrymen. The French Empire would doubtless not be sorry to revive the French Kingdom of Italy; but on no other terms would France consent to fix, in the blood of her soldiers, the image which flits perpetually across the sensitive imagination of the Italian people.

That the French alliance will not directly contribute to the extension of Italian freedom seems to be readily admitted by the Piedmontese. But they console themselves by repeating that (except in one instance) the Emperor of the FRENCH has not hitherto attempted to interfere with their liberties; so that, in all probability, the war, when it is concluded, will leave them quite as free as they were before it. But they forget that the nearer despotism is brought to them, the greater jealousy will it show; and the greater its power in Italy, the more strongly will it be tempted to put down the annoyances of the Press and the Tribune. Opinions and arguments which were tolerated in the Parliament of an independent State will never be patiently borne with in the municipal council of an outlying dependency; and the master of the keys of Italy will speak in a very different tone from a mere foreign sovereign. France, even if she is prevented from seizing Savoy, will stipulate for permanent facilities towards conveying her legions across the Alps, and nothing is more certain than that the interferences of the foreigner in Italy have always been in proportion to his means of military aggression. The House of Austria, for example, was by no means preponderant in the Peninsula before the first French Revolution. Its two Duchies of Milan and Mantua, communicating as they did by difficult roads with the hereditary States, were a source of weakness rather than of strength in the event of an Italian war. The possession which makes Austria dangerous to Italy is not Lombardy, but the territory of Venice, through which all the troops of the Empire can be poured into the valley of the Po. And it is a fact which may well moderate the enthusiasm of the Italians for their French protector, that the enmity to freedom with which Austria is justly taxed would have been absolutely innocuous if it had not been for the treachery of the first NAPOLEON. When the great General of the Republic forced the feeble Directory to commit the monstrous crime of confiscating Venetian liberty for the advantage of the House of Austria, he in effect offered Italy the alternative of two foreign despotisms—his own and that of the Germans. The nephew now proposes to depose the House of Austria from the

supremacy which the uncle bequeathed to it; but blind hatred, and enthusiasm equally blind, could alone fail to see that German influence is now to be banished from Italy on the same condition on which it was banished before—the condition that French influence shall be enthroned in its room.

#### THE LIBERAL PARTY AND ITS LEADERS.

THE true policy of the Liberal party at the present juncture may seem at first sight to be clearly pointed out by its position. Three hundred and fifty members of the majority have severally assured their constituents that they will carry out in the House of Commons the principles which they have avowed at the hustings; and whether they have undertaken to give a suspected Ministry a fair trial, or to enforce an efficient measure of Reform, their pledges have been understood to imply that Lord DERBY is to be turned out of office at the earliest possible opportunity. The aim of the Liberal party, as of every other party in opposition, is to get power and to keep it. Every politician who is in earnest must wish that his opinions should be represented by the Government which carries on the legislation of the country, as well as the administration of public affairs. If it is objected that there is at present little difference between the opinions of contending parties, it may be answered that the alleged unanimity only extends to a portion of the House, and that it is highly desirable that a majority which is necessarily dominant should be also visibly responsible. The small section which desires sweeping changes exercises more than its proportionate influence over the policy of a party in opposition. It is easy to agree on negatives, and even to concur in general propositions, as long as the practical meaning of votes and resolutions consists in the common purpose of effecting a change of Government. The return of the Liberal party to office implies the restoration of the more moderate leaders to their former supremacy over agitators and fanatics. Mr. BRIGHT will be courted and echoed by Lord JOHN RUSSELL and Sir JAMES GRAHAM as long as he is merely the most eloquent exponent of their hostility to Lord DERBY; but on the formation of a Liberal Cabinet he will at once become a troublesome ally, at the same time impossible to satisfy and dangerous to offend. When Sir ROBERT PEEL was in power there was no limit to the cordiality between O'CONNELL and the indefeasible representative of constitutional Liberalism. A few years of office converted the trusted friends of the great agitator into "base, brutal, and bloody Whigs;" and it was not until long after the fall of Lord MELBOURNE's Government that Lord JOHN RUSSELL publicly proclaimed his renewed sympathy for a patriot who had in the mean time undergone a political prosecution. It is not impossible that Mr. BRIGHT may experience, on the part of his present confederates, similar vicissitudes of conscientious conviction.

It is the policy of the Liberal party to get power and to keep it, and consequently not to get power by any method which may create an impossibility of keeping it. The country has made up its mind to express a desire for Reform, and communities as well as individuals always insist most strongly on demands which, as their secret consciousness informs them, by no means correspond with their private wishes. It is necessary to concede Reform, but the country neither thinks, nor pretends to think, that any revolutionary change is desirable; and consequently public opinion cannot be more unfaithfully represented than by a majority which, from the accident of its position, will inevitably demand something more than is offered. Mr. DISRAELI's political conscience will probably be found sufficiently elastic to make concessions which in themselves might give general satisfaction, but the pliability of a Government affords the same satisfaction to an eager Opposition which an old-fashioned gunner may have derived from the non-resistance of the feather-bed which protected the enemy's wall. The prolongation of the conflict for office will only extend and multiply the pledges by which the future Government will be bound. It is far better that the Liberal leaders should be forced to show their hand, and that there should be an Opposition to represent the doubts and scruples of the intelligent classes, than that the race for office should proceed between two competitors who are constantly tempted to lighten themselves by throwing more and more constitutional ballast overboard.

It is possible that Lord DERBY, notwithstanding his disclaimer of all pledges on Reform, may bring forward a Bill which a majority of the House of Commons will find it im-

possible to reject. If the Government had been judicious enough to try the experiment in the first instance, no better solution of a troublesome problem could have been offered to the country; but the debates of last session, and the just irritation arising from the dissolution, have unavoidably complicated the question. The Ministry, if it brings forward a project of Reform, must grant larger concessions, and the Opposition will be far more rigorously critical. On the whole, it seems probable either that the Government will endeavour to postpone legislation on the subject, or that any scheme which is brought forward will afford a fair pretext for defeating it in one of its early stages. In either case, the Opposition will be fully justified in making a decisive push for the recovery of office. It is only necessary to remember that the terms of union among the various sections of the majority must be settled in anticipation of a successful attack. Mr. BRIGHT and his friends have an interest in discrediting all recognised parties by rapid changes of Administration, and by the proof that political leaders find it impossible to combine. The great body of the Liberal party ought to be actuated by motives of a precisely opposite character. No member of the body ought to concur in a vote which must compel Lord DERBY to resign, except on the distinct understanding that the Minister who may succeed him is to receive hearty and undivided support. The candidates for power must settle amongst themselves their rival pretensions, on pain of finding themselves superseded if they persevere in disappointing the reasonable hopes of their adherents.

The practical difficulty will not arise from the efforts of the extreme Reformers. Formidable and active in opposition, Mr. BRIGHT must choose, under a Liberal Government, between Parliamentary helplessness and practical subordination to the Minister. Some time must elapse before he can renew the relations which enabled Mr. DISRAELI to triumph both in the division on the Conspiracy Bill, and in the serious peril of the CARDWELL resolution. If the Liberal ex-Ministers can agree among themselves, they have no immediate cause to fear either followers or allies. There is no reason, however, to suppose that former feuds have been extinguished, or that either of the rival chiefs of the Opposition is willing to abdicate his post. Lord JOHN RUSSELL has ostensibly gained most by the election; but a Premier requires colleagues, and all but the least squeamish members of the party entertain an inveterate and well-founded distrust of the tricky patriot who claims their allegiance. Lord PALMERSTON's experience in European politics is considered by many to deserve especial regard at the present moment, and the members of the last Liberal Cabinet are still bound by etiquette to recognise the chief with whom they served in office. Yet even if personal jealousies are smoothed over, it will be necessary that a new Cabinet should concur in the outlines of the Reform Bill which it is to carry. Lord JOHN RUSSELL, remembering the shouts of the hustings, will go as far as his party will allow him. Lord PALMERSTON, always averse to Reform, has already expressed his distaste for all unnecessary changes. The House of Commons, between pledges to do much and conscientious convictions of the inexpediency of doing too much, may probably be willing to follow the combined leaders if they can be induced to combine; but when two irreconcilable men support incompatible measures, it is sometimes difficult to maintain a steady allegiance to both. The difficulty will perhaps, in the first instance, be got over or evaded, but no Liberal Government can stand if an important section of the party stands aloof in a position of hostile watchfulness.

The small increase in the number of Conservative members may probably have the very desirable result of consolidating the various sections of the majority. It will be visibly imprudent to squabble and intrigue in the presence of an Opposition which counts 300 votes. The proximate Government will have the means of appealing to the party feeling of its supporters, by showing that a mutinous vote, or an obstinate secession, may at once place the enemy in power. The moderate portion of the majority may deduce from the state of parties a cogent argument against sweeping measures of reform, for it is certain that any proposal which should encounter the united resistance of the Conservative party in the House of Commons would be rejected, in the conscious strength of assured immunity, by the House of Lords.

Besides the inevitable Reform Bill, there is no important party question to be debated in the approaching session; but Mr. DISRAELI, or his successor, will be called upon to provide ways and means to meet an expenditure which must neces-



sarily be increased. In the present condition of Europe, Mr. GLADSTONE himself must have renounced the hope of carrying out the imaginary bargain between the country and itself for the remission of the Income-tax in 1860. It will be fortunate if the maintenance of the impost at the existing scale is found sufficient, without some additional taxation; and it is highly desirable that a scheme which can scarcely be acceptable in itself should be brought forward by a Government possessing the confidence of the House of Commons. The inconvenience of a Ministry on sufferance is more conspicuous in questions of finance than even in matters of legislation. It is impossible for a Chancellor of the Exchequer to consult the public interest, unless he feels himself able to overrule sectional opposition. If Lord DERBY should, in spite of all probable calculation, weather the dangers of Reform, it is almost certain that the discussions on the Budget will prove fatal to his further progress. On the whole, the well-wishers of the Government can augur for it nothing better than a short shrift, a sharp cord, and a reasonable prospect of early retaliation. If the Liberal party, on the other hand, fails to consolidate its power, the blame will fall not only on the leaders, but on the willing victims of personal jealousy and ambition.

#### THE ORGANIZATION OF THE INDIAN ARMY.

THERE is so much room for conjecture, and so slight a basis of ascertained fact on which to found a sound opinion as to the future organization of the Indian army, that it is not surprising that the Commissioners appointed to investigate the subject should have been unable to agree in a unanimous Report. On the most important point—the absolute and comparative strength of Europeans and natives to be maintained—the Commissioners concur in the opinion that the Europeans should not be less than 80,000, to comprise substantially the whole of the artillery, and that not more than double that number of natives should be included in the permanent establishment. It is satisfactory to have some definite understanding on this vital point; and notwithstanding the difficulty of arriving at precise numerical results on evidence so conflicting as that tendered to the Commission, their conclusion may be accepted as fairly representing the opinions of those best qualified to decide upon the subject.

Second only in importance to the matter which has thus been set at rest, was the question whether the European troops serving in India were to be wholly or partially composed of regiments specially enlisted for Indian service, like the old Company's troops, or whether the duties should be exclusively performed by the Line taking India in rotation with its other foreign stations. It was supposed, in some quarters, that the officers of the Company's army would welcome as a boon an absolute incorporation on fair terms with the rest of the QUEEN's forces, as giving them a higher position than a merely local corps could expect to attain. The evidence given before the Commission, and the conflicting views of the Commissioners themselves, have entirely dispelled this idea. As a rule, all the QUEEN's officers recommend the extinction of what we may still for convenience call the Company's European army, and the absorption of the existing force into the general military establishment of the country. The East Indian officers are almost equally unanimous in favour of the retention of local corps for a considerable proportion of the European force which it will be necessary to maintain in India. It somewhat diminishes the reliance which might otherwise be placed on the judgment of the experienced and distinguished men who have pronounced their opinions on the subject, to find not only that they do not agree, but that they divide themselves pretty accurately according to the commissions which they respectively hold. We have the views of the QUEEN's army and of the Company's service expressed with abundant emphasis, and no doubt with genuine conviction, but the corporate feeling of the two bodies has proved so powerful as to leave little room for the exercise of individual judgment.

The majority of the Commission adopt the opinions of the QUEEN's officers, and declare strongly in favour of the complete amalgamation of the Imperial and Indian armies—so far, that is, as the latter are composed of European troops; but the reasons on which the minority rely are also set forth in the body of the Report. Some of the arguments which thus invite comparison may be very shortly disposed of. The first point on the Horse Guards' side is, of course, the old stalking-horse of debate—the anomaly of a double

system. History, it is said, furnishes no precedent of two distinct armies supplied from the same sources and serving the same Sovereign. It is scarcely worth while to discuss the accuracy of this statement; though the contemporary history of our own country shows us the example of a Militia force, which is, in its essential constitution, distinct from the regular army. The real answer to theoretical objections of this kind is that which is given by the minority of the Commission—that the anomaly of a double army, like the anomaly of a double government, which is still in great measure retained, is a necessary incident of a position so anomalous as that of a free country holding despotic sway over an alien dependency. Probably the Horse Guards themselves would admit that the argument founded on the alleged anomaly of a double army must be taken as a mere ornamental introduction to the practical grounds on which their judgment rests. The only real question is, in what way the service required will be most efficiently and economically performed, and the two sections of the Commission have not hesitated to grapple with it. As to efficiency, the advocates of a single army for the whole Empire say that unity is essential to strength, and that the professional jealousies of two distinct armies would impair the efficiency of both. On the other hand, it is contended that the rivalry to be anticipated will not go beyond a wholesome emulation, and the experience of the combined action of the QUEEN's and Company's forces in times past is appealed to, we think with justice, in support of this opinion. A more serious objection to the continuance of local corps, if it be really supported by facts, is that the discipline and stamina of English troops inevitably deteriorate after a prolonged term of service in India. But this is stoutly denied by the Indian officers, who admit no superiority in the Line regiments, except, perhaps, a little more smartness on parade. On the contrary, they assert, with some show of reason, that the loss which a newly arrived regiment generally suffers from the change of climate far more than outweighs the permanent injury to European constitutions of a protracted residence in a tropical country.

It may be difficult, in the present state of sanitary information with regard to the army in India, to decide which of the two plans promises to reduce to the lowest point the injurious effects of an Indian climate; but while the local and the relief systems may be nearly balanced in this respect, there are other considerations which seem conclusive in favour of maintaining a considerable proportion of local troops. It is absolutely essential that the Government of India should have at its command a large body of officers familiar with the language, usages, and feelings of the inhabitants of the country. A term of ten years' Indian duty would no doubt induce the more energetic of the QUEEN's officers to qualify themselves for their duties by acquiring a thorough knowledge of India. But experience and reason equally lead to the conclusion that the majority of the officers of the Line will consider themselves as mere birds of passage in the East, and will be less anxious to make themselves thoroughly efficient Indian officers than those who have, as it were, made India their profession, and look to important appointments in the administration of the country as among their chief inducements to exertion. One other argument, not altogether to be overlooked, is derived from the risk to which India, it dependent entirely on the Imperial army, would be exposed of being denuded of troops to meet the demands of some European crisis. It is barely possible that occasions might arise which would justify a Minister in risking something in India in order to guard against a more imminent danger at home, but we cannot share the confidence of the majority of the Commissioners that no Government under any circumstances would ever venture to withdraw from India the troops necessary for its defence. The change which has come over the speeches of Ministers during the last few weeks is pregnant with warning in this respect. Before the actual outbreak of European war, what the Home authorities appeared chiefly struck with was the extreme convenience of having a scape-goat department on which to throw the greater part of the cost of the QUEEN's forces. The Horse Guards seemed to be quite grateful to India for absorbing more than 100,000 of our soldiers, and providing in the dépôt battalions a considerable force which cost us nothing, and was always at hand for our own protection. Suggestions that unnecessary regiments should be removed from the Indian establishment were apt to be met with the remark, that unless many months' previous notice were given, the War Office could not undertake

to receive an addition to its strength which would necessarily raise its expenditure beyond the amount which Parliament had sanctioned. To such an extent was this thoroughly red-tape principle carried, that just before the dissolution it was decided to send out 3000 artillerymen, not because they were wanted in India at the time, but because Lord CANNING had asked for them in the height of the mutiny, and the Home authorities, being anxious to get rid of the expense of the corps, were resolved to hold the GOVERNOR-GENERAL to his bargain. As every one knows, this scheme was abandoned when clouds began to gather nearer home, and so completely has the scene changed that we have Mr. DISRAELI counting the whole European army in India among the immediate resources for domestic defence.

The notion which is really at the bottom of these fluctuations of opinion is full of peril for India. It seems to be thought that the force to be maintained in the East ought to be regulated mainly by the convenience of this country. During the mutiny, the necessity was too great to allow such considerations to have any weight, but no sooner is the actual conflict over than our Government relapses into the huckstering spirit which it acquired in the Company's time as purveyor of troops to the Indian Empire. If there is an abundance of regiments on hand, India is to keep up a colossal establishment which it no longer requires. If we become anxious about the strength of our reserves at home, India is at once to supply all deficiencies. Just now the Indian Government would perhaps be as glad to part with some portion of its costly auxiliaries as we could be to regain their services; but in ordinary times it will be impossible to look to India either to supply deficiencies in the army at home, or to relieve England from the cost of any excess in her establishments. The strength of the forces in India will need the most exact adjustment. Her finances will not allow of a man more than is wanted, while any reduction below a safe standard would involve an amount of peril which it is difficult to over-estimate. The temptation to which English Ministers will be exposed to make Indian subservient to English interests in the distribution of the army, is one which we should be sorry to see strengthened by the absorption of the local army into the establishment of the Line. The Report certainly seems to justify the decision which Lord DERBY some time since announced, to employ as heretofore in the defence of India a force composed partly of local troops and partly of auxiliary regiments detached from the Line; and whatever changes may take place in the Government, we have little doubt that this prudent course will be adhered to. It is a secondary, but still a most material consideration, that the cost of keeping up a garrison of migratory troops must exceed that of maintaining local forces of equal strength. Sir ALEXANDER TULLOCH and Colonel BAKER, it is true, are at issue on the question, which they have complicated with a wonderful mass of figures for the benefit of the Commission. But it is obvious that, if our soldiers are to be relieved from England every ten or twelve years, a considerable addition must be made to the cost of transport; and this, in the present state of the finances of India, is not an unimportant consideration in favour of the maintenance of a large proportion of local troops.

#### FAITHFUL ALLIES.

MORE than two thousand years ago, the eyes of the civilized world were fixed upon the position of two rival Powers, betwixt whom there was but little in common. The one was a constitutional people, who led the van of liberty and of free opinion. They were a maritime and mighty nation, of incalculable resources and ancient prestige. Their vessels swept the seas—their commerce filled every port. They had in peace more docks, more arsenals, more ships of war than any other State. But they were isolated from the continent around them. Their military force was without organization or predetermined system. Their advisers were incompetent, and jealous of each other. They disliked taxes, and loved peace. For the sake of finance they starved their defensive expenditure, and kept but an inconsiderable standing army. Against the contingency of foreign hostilities they stored up no money. With all their naval strength, their arsenals and docks were neglected. New ships were built, and laid aside to rot; the decayed were not restored; and among all the names of the

statesmen of the day, one only is handed down to us as distinguished for having shown some solicitude for the welfare of the navy.

The other was a powerful monarch, half the elected, half the despot of a turbulent people. From his youth upwards he had been intriguing, dark, and determined. Fortune had smiled upon his career. He had begun with little, and had advanced himself to greatness. Under his command he held land forces almost irresistible. Ever since his early days he had been a student of strategics. Nor did he neglect the seas. Hour by hour his fleet increased—his maritime fortifications grew—harbours, walled and garrisoned, started on all sides into being, and seemed to threaten the security of the world. Above all, his personal character was stained by ill faith and cruelty. His chosen Ministers were men of worthless and dissolute habits. His personal companions were avaricious outcasts from society—vile caterers for his amusement—convicted profligates. Abroad he showed himself at once crafty and successful. He had established himself as a would-be Protector of the world. He was the hope of the factious and designing in the countries round—the champion of oppressed nationalities—the restorer of the enslaved. Between him and the Constitutional nation which was his rival there had been war, and there was now peace. The late foemen had become to one another "Faithful Allies."

Remarkable as it may seem, that nation did not disbelieve his professions of amity, which were as profuse as they were vague. She saw nothing of danger to herself in his perpetual intrigues and interventions among his neighbours. She was stricken with blindness before this notable aggressor of the age. It was indeed his object to protract as long as might be her credulity. Under her banner only was combination against him possible. Could he secure her neutrality, if not her co-operation, it would lend a colour of honesty to his foreign policy. Alas, she did not perceive that she was to be deceived last! Some, in truth, there were who, terrified by his terrible activity, lifted up their voices to unmask the traitor. But every nation has its Sir FRANCIS HEADS. Many of her leading men were intimates of the Monarch, and with eloquence inveighed against these ill-judged suspicions of an ally so candid, so devoted, and so strong. He, too, knew how to write letters to conciliate an independent people—rebuking their want of faith—complaining of the virulence and invectives of their party men. At last, the storm so long brewing broke in thunder, and Athens learnt too late the bitter lesson that it is a perilous thing to have a "faithful ally" in a PHILIP.

The story is not without a moral for ourselves, even though all have not the genius of PHILIP who can rival him in dissimulation and in strength. It is occasionally the lot of men to be afflicted with a judicial blindness which takes the form of fatal confidence in the betrayers of Truth and Justice. The lambs lean upon the wolves. The simple and the true repose their trust in the dishonest. One day their eyes are opened; but repentance is too late, and the historian of subsequent times records with wonder the folly that he cannot comprehend. Should it hereafter be the destiny of this nation to suffer wrong at the hands of our faithful ally across the Channel, our children will lament that their fathers were not forearmed when at least they were forewarned. We have seen strange things in our generation; and not the least strange has been the course ourselves have pursued, and the credulity ourselves have shown. A reckless adventurer, combining courage with craftiness, has won his way to an Imperial crown. At every step he has trampled under foot an oath. Solemn protestations and reiterated vows were to him but as dust to blind the eyes of his countrymen. Under the mask of patriotism he stole his way towards power. In the grey dawn of one December morning, France awoke to find the sword she had entrusted to him to defend her glittering at her own throat—her representative assembly dispersed—her leading men in chains—and her cannon directed against herself. The shepherd had turned his arm against the sheep. The penalties he had invoked upon his own head, if ever he should prove untrue, were inflicted first upon those who had persisted in committing all to his integrity. Over the dead bodies of Frenchmen, and amid the blaze of civil war, this protector of order entered on his reign, and a French Empire once more began.

England, unsuspecting to the end, still trusted. She only saw in the usurper a security for the present quiet and ultimate benefit of France—as if grapes could be gathered from



thorns, or as if any public good could come from a course of unblushing wickedness. NAPOLEON the THIRD had effected one avowed dream of his life. There were others as yet unaccomplished. But we closed our eyes. We grasped in honesty the hand which was held out to us. We took to ourselves an ally from whose friendship even English gentlemen should have shrunk. Then came visits to our QUEEN—extravagant displays of his insincere affection—while the French people, half amused, half angry, watched us clasping to our hearts a man who had lied to his own subjects, and fawned on all whom he had afterwards betrayed. The Crimean war seemed, however, to justify our confidence. Our armies and his fought side by side before Sebastopol, and their blood was commingled in the trenches. But the negotiations which ensued upon its conclusion, whatever they may have effected, certainly did not show that the French EMPEROR was over-solicitous for the honour or the interests of England. They resulted in a virtual abandonment of the principle for which we had fought. Nor was it long before the European journals teemed with rumours, apparently too well-founded, of a secret understanding between England's ally and England's late foe. Last year Imperial friendship culminated in the curious episode of the French Colonels. The inauguration of Cherbourg followed, and if some in this country were alarmed at the significant warning contained in it, it must be confessed that no suspicion troubled the deep slumbers of our Government. Those who muttered of contingent dangers were alarmists—were unpatriotic—were suspicious members of society. Lord MALMESBURY was not terrified—he never is. Lord PALMERSTON and friends betook themselves to Compiègne, and tilted away to their heart's content in the grotesque tournaments of stock-jobbing French Ministers and broken-down Counts. Why should we allude to the Portugal business? Can it be doubted that we were wrong in the view we took of the matter, as Lord DERBY assures us that LOUIS NAPOLEON was, as ever, in the right?

This year the coming tempest has burst upon us. For whole months England has been made a peace-puppet in the hands of one who was bent upon Continental war. Not even to the last were we allowed to hint the possibility of our being deceived. There was a sound of rumbling in the South—Lord MALMESBURY was sure it was not thunder. Lord CLARENDON doubtless believed it was the jousting at Compiègne. NAPOLEON III. knew it could not be the noise of France arming, for France was entirely disarmed. Besides, the Imperial soul was set upon peace and the English alliance. The barometers of the Foreign markets fell, it is true, and fell; but Mr. DISRAELI insisted the glass was rising—fine weather was just going to set in. At last the crash came; and one peaceful morning the news arrived that Europe was plunged into a fearful war—that 200,000 troops from "unarmed France" were about to cross the Alps into Sardinia. The only thing left to us is the old, and not very comforting reflection, that we thought so all along.

Henceforth LOUIS NAPOLEON may impose upon Lord MALMESBURY, but he will no more impose upon Great Britain. We have had enough of trusting. We must now begin in downright earnest to watch, to arm, to be prepared. Let us have no more personal alliances with one who lies so stoutly and so long. No more of these participations in revelries at Compiègne; or if such festivities are too tempting for our leading men to decline, they must cease to be the leading men of an indignant and awakened country. The French EMPEROR has nothing in the world to fear from us. We are for peace from one end of this land to the other. No English Cherbourg threatens invasion to the happy shores of France. But we on our side have grave reasons for alarm. Far be it from us to say that it is his purpose to attack us unprovoked. Who can decipher the future of the world? Who can read the intentions of a mind so dark and deceitful? But one thing assuredly we know. Should it be his interest or his aim to initiate a war against us, no feeling of friendship or of plighted faith will stand one moment in his way. On what can we rely? Not surely on the word of one who has poured away his honour like water. The occurrences of the last few months have shattered the English alliance, not indeed with France herself, whose interests are the same as ours, but with him who is at her head. Henceforth, any Ministry which would command English sympathy must stand aloof from LOUIS NAPOLEON—courteously but firmly, aloof; and may Heaven for ever protect us from any more such "Faithful Allies."

#### THE PROGRESS OF OUR DEFENCES.

THERE is seldom any great difference of opinion in this country on questions of foreign policy, but the entire unanimity of all classes, sects, and parties at this moment has, we believe, never before been approached. If the whole population were polled to-day, it is not certain that one dissident would be found from the policy of strict neutrality and adequate defence which has been advocated on every hustings in the kingdom. For once, even the Quakers appear to be cordially at one with the rest of the community. They have presented a memorial to Lord DERBY, in which their traditional regard for peace is expressed without the customary onslaught on the men of war. They even go so far as to recognise, in a covert manner, the possibility of a justifiable war; for, while congratulating the Administration on their choice of neutrality, they profess not to forget "the delicate position in which such a Government as that of Great Britain may be placed by sudden and unforeseen events, and how powerfully appeals to honour, and even to lower considerations, may work upon the public mind." If the retiring disciples of GEORGE FOX must exercise their pet practice of delivering homilies on public affairs, they could scarcely have done so in a less objectionable manner. The comparatively modest memorial to Lord DERBY is, at any rate, a vast improvement on the address to the Emperor NICHOLAS, which would no doubt have stopped the Russian war, had not the EMPEROR converted the Friends' delegates, instead of suffering conversion at their hands.

The desire to be ready for all emergencies, which decorous Quakers cannot do more than hint, is showing itself in a more energetic shape at Cambridge, Bristol, and other places, in the formation of Rifle Regiments. The few words which fell from Mr. SOTHERON-ESTCOURT in the course of a hustings speech on the subject of volunteer corps, have at length been followed by an official recognition which will suffice in a few weeks to cover the whole country with rifle regiments, which a very short training will convert into the best irregular troops in the world. If the recent course of events may be thought by some to have diminished the immediate risk of hostilities in which we may ourselves be engaged, they have not lessened the necessity for effectual preparation. A unanimous nation, ready and willing to take up arms at a day's notice, is one of the best of all securities for peace; and, difficult as the maintenance of neutrality may be, there will be a fair chance of success whenever our defences by land and sea shall have been put into the condition which becomes a Power like England during a Continental war. But in the interests of peace itself there should not be a day's delay in making up the leeway of the last few years. When Parliament meets, Lord DERBY'S difficulty will not be in obtaining an indemnity for any unauthorized outlay, but in satisfying the House of Commons that he has amply provided for every possible contingency. Everything indicates that the Bounty Proclamation will be entirely successful in securing abundant supplies of recruits for the fleet; and it has already proved that the difficulty of manning the navy, which has been so much discussed, is one which can always be solved by the offer of an adequate pecuniary temptation. The opponents of the simple plan of giving liberal pay to our seamen have themselves abandoned their old ground of the impossibility of overcoming private competition. It is something to have got rid of an idle bugbear, even though its place may be taken by another fallacy. The last new theory as propounded by the *Times* is, that sailors are so provident as to consider the chance of a pension fully equal to the certainty of pay, and at the same time so thoughtless as to prefer 10*l.* in hand to a much larger sum in addition to their monthly wages. Notwithstanding the improved intelligence of the modern race of seamen which is so much talked of, there can be no manner of doubt that a given sum expended in bounty money will operate as a rather more powerful inducement than an equivalent outlay in the shape of pay—just as an increase of pay would be greatly preferred to an equivalent in the form of a contingent pension. If the sole question were how to attract the largest number of men, it might be conceded that no plan could be so good as that of a bounty proportioned to the necessities of the moment. Whether one is buying the services of a sailor or the goods of a shopman, a ready-money purchase is almost certain to be the most economical; and if it were possible to prevent the enormous frauds which the

bounty system has produced whenever it has been tried, we should have no hesitation in preferring it to an increase of wages as a means for obtaining a rapid accession of naval strength.

But this is only one side of the question. A story was current some time since, that a single recruit had managed to take the militia bounty no less than thirty-five times before he was detected. Probably this was a gross exaggeration; but it is established by the returns that at one period of high bounties the desertions almost kept pace with the number of recruits. Every naval captain is aware how impossible it is to keep a crew together in a ship stationed in a home port, and as it is known that the service has within three years lost more than 13,000 men from this cause, it cannot be thought very prudent to add a large premium to the inducements to desert. After a little experience of the bounty experiment, it will not improbably be found that an equivalent addition to the monthly pay, if a little less effective in bringing men to the flag, would be a much more successful plan for keeping the newly-gathered crews together; and perhaps a combination of the two expedients would reduce to a minimum the inconveniences of each. The main objection which the *Times* urges to any addition to the regular pay is, that it would involve an enormous outlay which would be wholly gratuitous in ordinary years. "We procure," it is said, "all the 'seamen we need, emergencies apart, at the rate of 2*l.* 9*s.* a month, and the immense increase upon this would consequently be thrown away." The objection would be as nearly fatal as a merely economical objection can be, if it were true that every addition to the seaman's wages must necessarily be continued, whether the demand of the year were for 2000 or 20,000 recruits. But there is not the smallest difficulty in increasing the rates of pay when an emergency like the present occurs, on the express understanding that the addition, like the extra batta given to Indian regiments on foreign service, is to cease when the special occasion has passed away. Nothing could be simpler than to put the navy on war pay whenever a large addition to our armaments was called for, and to return to the rates which are found sufficient in ordinary times, so soon as the fleet was reduced to a peace establishment. By this arrangement the extra pay would be as readily adjusted to each emergency as the scale of bounty; while the anticipated outlay in peace time would be avoided without holding out the great temptation to desertion which a large bounty, combined with wages much below the market rate for the time being, is almost certain to supply. That there will be no lack of sailors, if adequate terms are offered, may be predicted with confidence; and there would be little occasion for anxiety if we were equally sure of having sufficient ships to put them in. What the dockyards are capable of doing it may be hoped is being done; but unless Sir JOHN PAKINGTON greatly understated his means at the opening of the last session, he will find it impossible, without extraneous help, to keep pace with the demands which this year will make upon our naval resources.

It is, we believe, quite practicable for England, by exerting her whole strength, to create, within a year, or perhaps in less time than that, a fleet which will enable her to choose for herself between peace and war. Every day which is lost in bringing up the navy to this high standard is one chance more added to the probabilities of war. Even Sir JOHN PAKINGTON admits that he is far from being as fully provided as the interests of peace require; and until this deficiency is supplied, those exertions only can be pronounced sufficient which call into activity all the resources that the Admiralty can by any means command. A very singular mode of reassuring the public mind has been adopted by the *Times* in its City article of yesterday. It is said, that in the event of our being forced into a war against a superior combination of naval Powers, our commerce could be carried on in American bottoms, under the new principle that free ships make free goods. Our loss, therefore, would be limited to the carrying trade in our own as well as in foreign merchandize. This is true enough, but how any one can contemplate as a small injury the destruction of our whole shipping interest, and the transfer of the carrying trade of the world to American rivals, is incomprehensible. It may safely be said that no expenditure, however large, would be too great to avert so ruinous a calamity, and that England will only then be prepared for war when she is able to protect her merchant shipping in every possible event. This condition is not as yet fulfilled, and we shall

be grievously disappointed in the new Parliament if it do not require from the Admiralty the strictest proof that no means have been neglected to shorten the period during which our naval forces must remain unequal to the adequate performance of this their first and most important duty. With an irresistible fleet and an army of volunteers, we may look on with indifference at hostile demonstrations; and it is certain that, if every opportunity is turned to account, this position is within our reach, perhaps in the course of a few months, certainly before the close of the first Italian campaign. When such a security shall have been obtained, and not before, the country will be prepared to acknowledge that Ministers have done their duty by restoring the naval supremacy of England—the best of all guarantees for peace.

#### PARTANT POUR LA SYRIE.

"LE jeune et beau DUNOIS"—only he is fifty, and none so handsome—has gone to the wars. It is an Emperor instead of an unknown Esquire; and he, too, before his departure, like his prototype—

Alla prier Marie,  
De bénir ses exploits.

Or, if not from the Queen of Heaven, he took advice from the Scotch spiritualist who is said to be domestic hierophant at the Tuileries. Now begins the serious part of LOUIS NAPOLEON'S career. It was certain to come to this sooner or later. Only two courses are open to a successful usurper—he must maintain his position by extraordinary civic virtues or by extraordinary military successes. If not a WASHINGTON, he must be a NAPOLEON. The lesson of history is uniform in this respect. In France especially, the necessity laid upon CLOVIS survives in his pinchbeck successor. It disquieted the great kingly but Sicambrian mind, that the Goths, who were Arians, should occupy the fair Loire lands. It insults the Imperial and Corsican sense of the propriety of things that Savoy and Lombardy should not become the homes of the Napoleonic bees, and that the French eagles should not dip their wings in their own Rhine. This is the idea which the present Emperor represents. It is a consistent whole, and unfortunately it is not one which is either new or unpopular in France. To it, and to it alone, the present EMPEROR owes his throne. The bill which he drew on his destiny and star is due, and it must be paid. A European war of aggression is just as normal and necessary to Imperial France as it was impossible for Rome to exist without that perennial "war again with the Samnites," which turns up annually in Livy, like the swallows and green figs. As to all the nonsense which has been talked in Parliament, and on the hustings, and to Legislative Chambers, about the Empire being peace, and about our faithful ally, and the united interests of the two countries, and the reluctance to draw the sword, and the rest of it, thinking men knew all along what must be the end of it, and what irresistible current had set in. A war of aggression was as certain to turn up as the fatal figures in a recurring decimal. It could not be otherwise. This was the natal star—this was the destiny to be accomplished. This was, in a word, the political necessity for which the Crown was given and taken. Many people seem still to think, or affect to think—for, if thinkers at all, they do not really believe—that it is only by an accidental complication that France and Austria are at war. They forget, or find it convenient not to proclaim, that it is not at all a mere question of France and Austria, but that it is now, because it has always been, the destiny of one man, a tyrant and usurper, to go to war somewhere to keep himself on a throne won by violence and fraud. Whenever a despot rises from the ranks through blood and by exiling the best men of the country, he must go to war with his neighbours. It is really, after all, not a question of Austrian severity or Italian misrule—of the depression of Lombardy or the misgovernment of Rome—but of one man's ambition which must have its way through blood. We may believe, as we do, that nothing can be worse than the existing state of Italy, but it is that single man LOUIS NAPOLEON'S destiny, as he is pleased to call it, to which we owe a European war. If it had not been Austria, it must have been somebody else. It is war which is the necessity of his case—the particular war is a mere accident.

Of course, as regards the English estimate of the campaign in Italy, it is much in LOUIS NAPOLEON'S favour—so far, that is, as it helps to disguise the actual enormity and atrocity of his individual career of crime, and the utter wantonness and recklessness of the war itself—that our sympathies are natu-



rally with Sardinia and against Austria. But this ought not to be uppermost in our thoughts as we accompany the nephew of his uncle to the ominous plains of Marengo. We are by no means prepared to say that the English interference in the last great Continental war was always justifiable, either morally or politically; but in spite of many grotesque and foolish forms in which it expressed itself, there was something right and substantial in the English hatred of the first NAPOLEON. Our fathers saw in him the very incarnation of a selfish ambition. They recognised in him a sort of fatalism of blood—a scourge of God which must be wielded till humanity was worn out with the torture of spoliation and slaughter. They did not look to the personal character of the man, but to the law of tyranny which, from his position, he must work out. They knew he was altogether reckless of human life and human suffering, and that he cared not what seas of blood he shed, perhaps not for the personal lust of slaughter, but to keep himself a crowned Emperor. And we say it distinctly, that our English hatred and horror of this sort of Emperor was right and justifiable. And this feeling we are not called upon to suppress. It is a good and righteous feeling; and on the whole it is much more to the present purpose than puzzling ourselves too much with all the diplomatic complications and the conventional steps which precede every rupture. Lord COWLEY's mission, and the protracted juggling about mediation and disarmament, are pretty subjects for the closet politician; but what ought to possess the popular heart of England is the single, simple thought of the political necessity laid upon the French EMPEROR. We are not speaking of his personal character, though it is a fruitful theme—we are not exaggerating the magnitude of his crime with the view of showing that it is our business to avenge that crime by arms, as BURKE used to contend. But England would do well to look more at French ambition, and less at the accidents of the present Continental war.

We do not forget, as the French trumpets are ringing out their "Partant pour la Syrie," the EMPEROR's antecedents. We are not now disposed to let the 2nd of December and its unspeakable wickedness fade from our memory. As RIVERS, GRAY, and VAUGHAN sat heavily on the conscience of our great historical example of the Imperial system, so ought the ghosts of December, the wailings from Cayenne, the shrieks from Lambessa to do their work on the Messiah of Order. We are not going to forget at this particular epoch that LOUIS NAPOLEON found France free, and quits it enslaved—free, we say, or at least on the way to freedom, for the Red Republic had worked, or was working itself, out, and CAVAIGNAC would have reconstructed what the PRESIDENT destroyed. And from the hour of his election to this, LOUIS NAPOLEON's line has been undeviating. The *coup-d'état* itself was only a step in the regular order of things. Liberty has been trampled out by a system which is even more demoralizing and criminal than that of the old Roman proscriptions. Mind and freedom of thought have been manacled; the press is extinct in France; literature is poisoned; religion is corrupted, and has not risen superior to the most sordid temptations. Massacre, treason, and deportation of the best citizens are crimes neither to be forgotten nor forgiven. And this, and nothing less than this, is the internal aspect of the Imperial system. It has never wavered nor swerved a single hair's breadth in the dreadful directness and completeness of its aim. LOUIS NAPOLEON could afford to pardon M. DE MONTALEMBERT; but if he could not have afforded it, he would have shot him in a ditch as coolly as his uncle murdered the Duc d'ENGHIEN. Corruption through every remote fibre of official life, stock-jobbing in high places, bribery and demoralization, are the domestic rule. It is not that France likes this; but it is a system which happens to be the only possible one; and while we pity rather than condemn that great people, we cannot be false to our own position as the maintainers of truth and liberty—of liberty in personal thought and action, in letters and intelligence, and of truth, as against national demoralization and corruption. And, however little we are disposed to counsel a rupture with one who only indirectly plots against us—and we repeat that LOUIS NAPOLEON, by the very necessities of his political existence, must plot against us, that is, against every principle that we hold dear—we are bound to say that LOUIS NAPOLEON can have neither the good will nor the good wishes of the English people in this his first campaign. It may suit the sycophants of Compiègne, or the inveterate traffickers in what is called statecraft in Downing-street, to forget or to veil the antecedents of

LOUIS NAPOLEON. But, as it is ours to live a history, we may as well think and write a history. This is the history of the Third NAPOLEON, written in letters of blood on France, and it ought at no moment—still less at the present—to be absent from the conscience of mankind.

To suppose that a liberticide in Paris has the slightest sympathy with real liberty at Turin or Venice is to read history backwards. As he is at home, so must he be abroad. The First NAPOLEON was, according to himself, the Apostle of Liberty. He, too, had a mission to enfranchise our beautiful Italy—his words, like his nephew's, were as honey, yet were they very swords. The sword is the symbol and pledge of the Imperial existence. It is all very well to scoff at the parallels which have been drawn between the first and second Empires, and to laugh at what are derisively called the exaggerations of literary ingenuity; but it is to history that we make the appeal. The thing that has been must be. Given the same system, the same motives, the same principles, and substantially the same man—and the same results must follow. It is a law of God—of God, it may be, in his anger—but still of God. This war cannot be other than the last war, because it has the same instruments, the same objects, and arises from the same state of things.

There is indeed a difference; and in that difference—a happy one—are signs, though solitary ones, of hope. The fiery and youthful soldier of fortune who won the Bridge of Arcola and Rivoli, and whose star culminated on Marengo, is one thing—the strategical pedant who fights his first battle at fifty is another. The same Marengo opens its fatal field, but another sun may arise on it, and that may not be a sun of victory. We are not going to commend prayers one way or the other, and certainly we are not ready to accompany Lord SHAFTESBURY to his closet or his tub. We admit we have no special love for the Austrian legions; but if there is a God of Battles, there are certain recollections which, divinely inspired, must visit even an Emperor's tent on the battle-field. If they are memories of massacre and treason—of a whole kingdom enslaved and corrupted to the core—of liberty banished, thought fettered, speech gagged, religion corrupted, broken oaths and perjured vows—then, perhaps, on another field than that of Bosworth, the voices of the night may utter to another RICHARD those ominous words:—

Bloody and guilty, guiltily awake,  
And in a bloody battle end thy days.

#### MR. BUCKLE AND SIR JOHN COLERIDGE.

MR. BUCKLE has published in the last number of *Fraser's Magazine* an article on Mr. Mill's essay *On Liberty*, which is very characteristic in more ways than one. It is as well written, as learned, and as discursive, and in some very material points as harsh and unjust, as that part of the *History of Civilization* which is already before the world. The article begins by a well-merited testimony to the genius of Mr. Mill, which gives occasion for a dissertation on a standing opposition which appears to Mr. Buckle to exist between speculative and practical ability. This, he says, arises partly from the mischievous habit of patronage, partly from the circumstance that "the speculative classes search for what is distant, whilst the practical classes search for what is adjacent." In support of this theory, no less than thirty-nine eminent writers are enumerated who have been sadly deficient in common sense. The list is a most singular one, including as it does Lord Bacon, Sir Walter Scott, and Fearnie (the author, we suppose, of the *Treatise on Contingent Remainders*). It would certainly be curious to know what were the remote and profound truths which blinded Scott to immediate objects, or how Fearnie, a very ingenious man and a great real property lawyer, displayed either speculative genius or incapacity for common business. Lord Bacon's practical ability is attacked with all the vehemence which ingenious men show in working out crotchets. He was not only, Mr. Buckle informs us, a heartless villain, but a bungling villain into the bargain; and the bungling character of his villainy arose from his gigantic genius. His mind was so intent upon remote results and general truths that he overlooked what fell under his immediate notice. "Ingratitude, aggravated by cruelty, must, if it is generally known, always be a blunder as well as a crime, because it wounds the deepest and most universal feelings of our common nature." . . . "But the philosopher could not foresee those immediate consequences which a plain man would have easily discerned." . . . "The mighty thinker was in practice an arrant trifler. He always neglected the immediate and the pressing." And then follows the story about his catching a cold, which ended fatally, by stuffing a fowl with snow, "with an absence of common sense which would be incredible if it were not well attested."

To say that a man who, though the greatest philosopher of his age, found time and energy to raise himself to the rank of Lord

Chancellor, was wanting in practical ability because he did not manage the business of receiving bribes with the callous indifference of a thorough-paced villain—because he was guilty of an act of meanness which secured him Court favour at the expense of what was then comparatively unimportant, popular esteem—and because he was so unwise as to perform an experiment at the risk of catching cold—suggests the observation that some future historian of civilization might be inclined to add a fortieth name to those of the thirty-nine men of letters whom Mr. Buckle cites in support of his proposition. To say that Sir Walter Scott could not manage common affairs is surely no less absurd. The misfortune which so grievously embittered the close of his life might have overtaken any man, and similar misfortunes constantly do overtake the keenest and acutest men of business. Sir Walter Scott was through his whole career engaged in a multitude of business transactions, and almost all of them terminated most prosperously.

After a digression about the patronage of literature, Mr. Buckle goes on to the services rendered by Mr. Mill to the science of logic, and shows in a very interesting manner his position in relation to various great thinkers of various ages. He then gives a summary of his arguments about Liberty, passes into an attack on Sir John Coleridge, which we propose to examine with some detail, and finally concludes the article with an argument upon a future life. He wishes to show, he observes, how full a liberty he would concede to inquiry by giving an extreme case. He would wish the doctrine of a future life to be freely discussed, and lest he should be supposed to intend to attack what he most entirely believes, he gives an argument in favour of it which he considers to be particularly important, because it is independent of revelation, and would apply with undiminished force if revelation ceased to be believed. The argument is neither more nor less than this, that people who are attached to their friends would be shocked at supposing that their affection ended with life. This argument is certainly independent of revelation, but it hardly does as well. Indeed, it has the unfortunate peculiarity of being calculated to prove anything, for hatred and indifference are parts of our nature, as well as love; and if the goodness of love proves our immortality, the wickedness of hatred or indifference must prove the reverse. Mr. Buckle's argument would illustrate the future prospects of nothing except Shelley's

Spirits who lie in the azure sky,  
Where they love but live no more.

We have given a sketch of this curious article as an introduction to our observations on one part of it, not only because it is the work of a remarkable man, but because its structure affords abundant evidence of the rash, peremptory, and one-sided form into which Mr. Buckle's speculations usually fall. These are just the faults to which men of letters, whose life is passed in study and speculation, are most exposed, and which too frequently lead them to do cruel injustice to those whose pursuits are not of the same character. A man who is so unjust to Lord Bacon and Sir Walter Scott can hardly be expected to be very equitable in his estimate of a living judge, and the peculiarity of his views as to what is evidence of a future state is not altogether immaterial to the question of the justice of his conception of the law relating to blasphemous libels.

In a note to Mr. Mill's *Essay on Liberty* a short and indignant reference occurs to the case of a man named Pooley, who was tried at the Bodmin Summer Assizes of 1857 for blasphemous libel, and sentenced, on conviction, to eighteen months' imprisonment by Sir J. Coleridge. Mr. Buckle was so scandalized at this, that he suspected some mistake, and accordingly "carefully investigated the facts." He gives the result of his inquiry in a tone which is not unlike that of Mr. Charles Reade's ludicrous tirade about the case of Birmingham gaol—a tirade curiously enough directed against the same judge, though with even more injustice. "A great crime," he says, "has been committed, and the names of the criminals ought to be known. They should be in every one's mouth. They should be blazoned abroad, in order that the world may see that in a free country such things cannot be done with impunity; and surely no punishment can be more severe than to preserve their names." After some more observations follows a short paragraph giving the names of the prosecutor, the committing magistrate, and the judge. "Of the first two little need be said. It is to be hoped that their names will live, and that they will enjoy that sort of fame which they have amply earned." There is a self-sufficiency about this which is at once offensive and absurd. A man must live almost exclusively among books and admirers, and have few connexions with the ordinary affairs of life, who can attach this degree of importance to a magazine article. To mention a man with disapprobation in *Fraser's Magazine* is not exactly equivalent to damning him to everlasting fame. We can tell Mr. Buckle what the real effect of his awful denunciation will be. During the early part of the present month, some of the readers of *Fraser's Magazine* will recollect that he made an attack on Sir John Coleridge. During the early part of next week some of the readers of the *Saturday Review* will remember that we remarked upon his attack. The first day of next month in the one case, the last day of next week in the other, will wipe out the recollection of the controversy from the minds of nineteen-twentieths of that very small number of persons who took a passing interest in it a fortnight since, or will take a passing interest in it to-morrow.

The circumstances of Pooley's case are as follows:—He wrote upon a gate some abusive remarks about Christianity; on other occasions he made blasphemous observations, coupling the name of Christ with contumelious reproaches in a public-house. He was indicted for this, and the counsel for the prosecution told the jury that the offence imputed to the man was that of using language which was calculated to shock the feelings of his neighbours, and was used for that purpose, and not by way of expressing or advocating any theological opinion whatever. He said that to attack Christianity in the way of *bona fide* discussion might be wrong, but that no one would think of punishing such conduct as a crime. That on the other hand, to utter reproaches intended merely as reproaches, and not as arguments against beliefs entertained by a large majority of persons, and favoured in various ways by the law of the land, was a crime which deserved punishment like any other violation of public decency. The judge, in his summing up, took precisely the same ground. The prisoner was convicted, and was sentenced to eighteen (Mr. Buckle says twenty-one) months' imprisonment. The prosecution may have been ill-judged, and the sentence we think was too severe; and if Mr. Buckle had confined his observations to these two points, we should not have noticed them; but he has gone far beyond this, and has made the facts which we have stated the occasion of a string of unjust charges against a man of the most unblemished character, and he has urged these charges with an intemperance of language which nothing can excuse. He says, first, that Pooley was a man of irreproachable character, of industrious habits, and "supporting his family by the sweat of his brow, respected by his neighbours, and loved by his family, for whom he toiled with a zeal rare in his class, or indeed in any class." It is not absolutely inconsistent with this account of Pooley's virtues, but it is rather a strange comment upon it, that Mr. Buckle couples with it a statement that he was all but mad, being a prey to every sort of strange delusion. The virtue and the lunacy of the prisoner are, however, both insisted on as aggravations of the wickedness of the judge. It would have been but ordinary fairness to Sir John Coleridge to have added that at Pooley's trial not one word was said either as to his character or as to his madness. If the delusions mentioned by Mr. Buckle had been proved in evidence, Pooley would undoubtedly have been acquitted. To a judge, that which does not appear must be as if it did not exist; and it is most unjust, in looking at Sir J. Coleridge's conduct, to view it in any other light than that in which it would have stood had Pooley been a perfectly sane man, of whose conduct nothing was known. Mr. Buckle, however, goes much further than this. He imputes to Sir John Coleridge not only cruelty but cowardice. He did, says his critic, in Cornwall what he would not have dared to do in London. "We expect," says Mr. Buckle, "that our superior judges . . . shall not ferret out some obsolete law for the purpose of oppressing the poor, when they know full well that the anti-Christian sentiments which that law was intended to punish are quite as common among the upper classes as among the lower, and are participated in by many persons who enjoy the confidence of the country, and to whom the highest offices are entrusted." . . . "He (Sir John Coleridge) would not have dared to commit such an act in the face of a London audience and in the light of the London press," (we may observe in passing, that a report of the trial appeared in the *Times*). "Neither would he nor those who supported him have treated in this manner a person belonging to the upper classes. . . . Hardly a year goes by without some writer of eminence and ability attacking Christianity, and every such attack is punishable by law. Why did not Mr. Justice Coleridge and those who think like him put the law into force against those writers? Why do they not do it now? . . . 'Simply because they dare not. I defy them to it.'"

The passage we have quoted not only misconceives the law, but is most unjust on Sir John Coleridge personally. A tone runs through it which appears to have been adopted on a supposition so absurd that we cannot suppose Mr. Buckle really entertained it. His language seems to imply that there was a black conspiracy, in which Sir John Coleridge and the counsel for the Crown were actors—that they "selected the theatre of this prodigious crime"—that they "played their parts with zeal"—and that Sir John in particular could choose by some mysterious process whom he would try in Cornwall, and whom he would try in London—a matter with which he had absolutely nothing to do. One point in this passage deserves special notice. The counsel for the Crown, it is said, was the judge's son; and "father and son seem to have played their parts with equal zeal." No insinuation could be more offensive than this; for it implies that a judge and a barrister, being father and son, from feelings of party spirit plotted together to commit an iniquitous perversion of justice. To insinuate that there was any private understanding hostile to the prisoner between the judge and the counsel in a criminal case, is to insinuate that both parties were dead to all sense of professional duty. To base the insinuation upon the relationship of the parties is to make it additionally offensive; for to men with the feelings of gentlemen, that circumstance would in itself form an additional motive against improper conduct. Mr. Buckle ought to have been restrained from this remark, by his own sense of what is due from one gentleman to another. As to the insinuation itself we shall not say a single word; but we may observe that whatever Mr.



Buckle may think, the judge and the counsel for the Crown have no more to do with getting up prosecutions than the man in the moon.

Law is not Mr. Buckle's strong point. In one of the notes to his History of Civilization he spoke of the "immortal work" of that most unscientific of writers Justice Story; in another, he glorified the Statute of Frauds, which has perhaps produced as much litigation as it has prevented, and the passage quoted above shows that he is ignorant of the degree in which the administration of English law is, and so long as it remains uncoded must always be, modified by circumstances, so that a law passed for one purpose is constantly applied to another. What the original law upon blasphemous libels may have been is not a very important question. As at present administered, it is merely meant to protect public decency. Indeed, an eminent writer on the Law of Libel treats this distinction as being at present embodied in the law, though its original scope may have been wider. "It may not be going too far," says Mr. Starkie, "to infer from the principles and decisions that no author or preacher who fairly and conscientiously promulgates the opinions with whose truth he is impressed for the benefit of others, is for so doing amenable as a criminal; but a malicious and mischievous intention is in such cases the broad boundary between right and wrong." No one would think of punishing the writers referred to by Mr. Buckle, for the expression of their views, so long as they write *bonâ fide*; but if they walked up and down the Strand with placards on their backs, coupling sacred names with obscene or abusive epithets, they would be rightly punished, and we feel confident that public opinion would not only concur in their punishment, but would in all probability call for a very severe one.

There are cases in which Mr. Buckle himself would probably be glad to see the law which he denounces enforced. If a missionary went into a mosque at Delhi, and said that Mahomet was a villain, an adulterer, a rogue, a liar, and a murderer, would not Mr. Buckle or Mr. Mill be the first to say that he would deserve punishment for trampling on the feelings and exciting the passions of his neighbours without any reasonable cause for doing so? If a man went about in France or Italy reviling the saints and the Virgin Mary, would not his conduct rightly expose him to punishment? *Bonâ fide* discussion is one thing and wanton insult another; nor can we see the slightest inconsistency in permitting the one and preventing the other. Probably in most cases it is wisest to let such occurrences pass unnoticed, because their discussion attracts attention to them; but if there were no law on the subject it would be in the power of a few individuals to produce an indefinite amount of annoyance and irritation to thousands. The blasphemous placards and caricatures exposed in the shop of Carille could not affect the merits of Christianity, but they were excessively offensive, and were a nuisance which required abating. The existence of a law against blasphemous libels may occasionally give rise to an unwise prosecution, but its total absence would occasionally give rise to the grossest scandals. It is in the nature of all legal definitions to include many things to which the authors of the law would not wish to apply it. In strictness of law, a man who uses a sheet of newspaper without leave is a thief—a man who lays his hand on another's shoulder commits an assault—every number of every newspaper ever published probably contains what in strictness is libellous; but it would be a monstrous thing to give people a legal right to use their neighbour's paper, to lay their hands lightly on their shoulders, or to libel them up to a certain point. The only possible security against the abuse of many customs is that they should not be invested with the character of legal rights. We do not mean to say that our law against blasphemous libels might not be more explicit and more wisely framed than it is, but of the necessity of such a law we feel no doubt at all.

Whatever may be thought of the law upon this subject, it surely cannot be denied that our view of the question, adopted as it is by a very large proportion of persons at the present day, has at any rate enough semblance of reason to protect a judge who acts upon it from lavish and violent abuse. Sir John Coleridge probably does not much mind being called names; but, for the sake of his own reputation, Mr. Buckle should not speak of such a man as "the criminal," whom he is "dragging from his covert," "the unjust and unrighteous judge," "the stony-hearted man who held him (Pooley) in his gripe," "his cold heart and shallow understanding." For very many years Sir John Coleridge discharged most arduous duties in a manner which won for him the very highest respect from all classes of society. To couple his name with cruelty, cold-heartedness, and the like, is to insult the feelings and understandings of many hundreds of persons who know and honour him; and to do this because he took a different view from Mr. Buckle of the amount of punishment which ought to be inflicted in a case in which he had no conceivable interest, is not the happiest illustration that could be given of respect for the opinions of others.

Mr. Buckle says, that of Sir John Coleridge personally he has no knowledge. "Individually, I can feel no animosity towards men who have done me no harm, and whom I have never seen." We answer, that he ought to know something of the general character of a public man before he lavishes on him the epithets which we have quoted. How would Mr. Buckle like to be stigmatized by any one who might disagree with his own article, as "that slanderer," "that calumniator," "that unjust and unrighteous libeller?" He, or his friends for him, would say, and

most justly, "You should not speak so of a man who has given abundant proof of very high literary ability, of great learning, of many qualities of the highest kind, merely because you think his language on this occasion ill-judged and intemperate?" and if the answer were, "I never read Mr. Buckle's book, and know nothing about him," the reply would be—"You should read it before you revile him." Sir John Coleridge has publicly administered justice for more than twenty years in every part of England—a function which requires qualities far rarer and powers far higher than most forms of authorship, and no man has a right to call him names who has not studied his career. Mr. Buckle can quote thirty-nine authors (of most of whose names we own with shame we are utterly ignorant) to show that men of letters sometimes do silly things; but a tenth part of the research necessary for this purpose would have enabled him to collect the evidence of a larger number of witnesses who would have shown him that Sir John Coleridge is not the monster of iniquity he supposes him to be. We fear, however, it will be in vain to argue with Mr. Buckle, for he says—"In such cases our passions instruct our understanding. The same cause which excites our sympathy for the oppressed stirs up our hatred of the oppressor. This is an instinct of our nature, and he who struggles against it does so to his own detriment." (Mr. Buckle has certainly not done himself that injury.) "It belongs to the higher region of the mind; it is not to be impeached by argument. It cannot even be touched by it." Mr. Buckle's vehemence reminds us of an anecdote told by Lord Cockburn. On hearing that an old Scotch judge had declared that a certain proposition was such bad law that the Almighty could not make it good, an Edinburgh professor observed that it must be very bad indeed, as his Lordship had told him that he saw no difficulty in supposing that the same power might have made  $3+2=6$ . Mr. Buckle has so very high an opinion of the power of argument to invalidate evidence usually considered conclusive, that assertions which he admits to be unimpeachable by argument, must be very plain indeed. He argued in his book at great length to show that our consciousness of the freedom of the will does not prove that the will is free; but "the higher region of the mind" asserts Sir John's wickedness so much more emphatically, that it must be heard, and no argument can be admitted against it even by Mr. Buckle's unlimited love of free discussion. A less positive philosopher than Mr. Buckle may be allowed to suggest that our passions occasionally supersede our understanding, when we suppose that they only instruct it.

#### ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT.

THE death of Alexander von Humboldt is felt as a European event at a time when the fate of nations is in the balance. He had achieved a transcendent reputation at a time when the men who are now famous were schoolboys or still unborn, and he lived among us with unimpaired powers and vivid intellectual sympathies—a little older than we are in memories, more exalted in nature, but human in every pulse. The mere fact that, as Goethe said of him, "he knew everything, and knew everything thoroughly," was the smallest part of his greatness. Universality of acquirement is the ideal excellence of a pedant; and Alexander von Humboldt was a poet deriving his scientific inspirations from the highest artist of his times, and working up his results into a systematic form, in which nature was expressed rather than analysed. He has founded no science, but he has left his mark upon all; and the very conception of knowledge as a kosmos or an organic whole, instead of an encyclopædia or arbitrary collection of fragments, may be fitly taken as the distinguishing sign of progress between this century and the last. Such a conception of the universe, like Newton's great discoveries, is a glory which only one man can achieve, and which every child who comes after him can appreciate.

Alexander von Humboldt, the son of a Prussian gentleman and soldier, was born in 1769 at Berlin. His elder brother by two years was Wilhelm von Humboldt, afterwards famous as a statesman and philologist. Both brothers were educated at home in the family country seat at Tegel, near Spandau, and their first tutor, by a curious chance, was Campe, well known in English nurseries as the author of the *Swiss Family Robinson*. It is curious to speculate how much the teacher may have contributed to the taste for adventure and scientific studies which made his pupil's name a household word in Europe. But the young Alexander's childhood was not brilliant. A weak constitution prevented serious application, and even the growth of the mind seemed uncertain and slow. It was only in later years that thought developed itself, and a strong will triumphed over a sickly frame. After studying what are called the "Kameral sciences," at Frankfort-on-Oder, with a view to work in the Government mines, Humboldt went to the University of Göttingen. Among his fellow-students there, the shallow pedant, August von Schlegel, was the only one of note who belonged, even in germ, to the Romantic school which then dominated Jena; and Humboldt's most memorable acquaintance was with the philologist Heyne, and with Heyne's son-in-law, the unfortunate naturalist, George Forster, who had earned a reputation as the companion of Cook in his voyages. The two friends travelled together in 1790 through the Netherlands, France, and England, and Forster's *Views of the Lower Rhine* commemorate the results of their observations. It was an epoch of revolution, and Forster, an enthusiastic democrat, combined his philosophical speculations

with his old scientific results—coupling together the two sciences of animal and political life. From this training Humboldt withdrew for a time to official life, at first as assessor of a mining board, and afterwards as director of the mines of Barieuth. His labours were certainly not superficial, for when only twenty-one he published an *Essay on the Basalts of the Rhine*. But he felt the want of more universal culture, and in 1795 relinquished his post, that he might devote himself for a time to the study of botany and electricity. Thus fitted to observe on a large scale, and with the experience of an excursion to North Italy, he went in 1798 to Paris as the great centre of science. The wars that prevailed everywhere disconcerted two separate projects of journeys in the company of his friend, Aimé Bonpland; and Humboldt went in despair to Madrid, with a hope of entering Africa from Spain. Fortunately the Saxon Minister was his friend, and by his advice the Government encouraged him to explore the immense possessions of the Spanish Crown in America. Accordingly the next five years were spent with Bonpland in a splendid series of researches, which extended chiefly over the present States of Venezuela, New Grenada, and Peru. The difficulties of traversing an unexplored country, peopled by savages, in a pestilential climate, are such as no description can reproduce. Once the wanderers were deserted in the midst of the Orinoco rapids by their guides. Constant exposure to heat and rain was inevitable; but the strong will of the feeble traveller bore him up. One of the more striking results of the expedition was an ascent of Chimborazo for the first time—a mere incident in the journey, but one on which many men would have rested their fame as travellers. The thirst for knowledge was even yet unsated, and on his return to Europe Humboldt employed 1805 in a visit to Naples—this time in the company of the great French chemist, M. Gay Lussac. The first fruits of his discoveries were given to the Berlin Academy in a lecture entitled “Ideas with a view to a Physiognomical Classification of Plants.” This contained a distribution of the world into sixteen separate Floras, and is chiefly remarkable for the picturesque colouring of the language. Goethe cordially welcomed his pupil’s labours in a brief review. Public curiosity was impatient; and without hurrying his great work, Humboldt in 1808 published the first edition of his *Views on Nature*. His *Travels* appeared more slowly, in a colossal form, between 1810 and 1817; and additions were made from time to time down to 1832. For twenty years—between 1807 and 1827—he resided mostly in Paris, where he had been sent at first with a diplomatic mission; and his works exhibit forcibly the clearness and condensation of French thought. In 1829 he undertook a scientific journey through Siberia in the company of Professors Ehrenberg and Rose, and studied the mountain chains and the climatology of Central Asia. His *Asie Centrale* appeared in 1843. The next, and unhappily the last great work, was the *Kosmos*, the first volume of which appeared in 1845. It was a characteristic attempt to give a simple conception of the world from the point of view of Physical Geography. Labouring to the last in his vocation, the author “*pertransiit benefaciendo*.”

Humboldt was one of those men who never parade their private lives before the world. Yet he lived at one time in society, commanding it by his colossal reputation, and endearing himself to all about him by simplicity and hearty kindness. He was warmly attached to his brother, who, he tells us, “exercised a great influence on the direction of his thoughts through his counsel and assistance.” For a short time, in 1827-9, they lived together again in Tegel, and William rejoiced in his younger brother’s activity. “Alexander is truly a *puissance*, and has achieved a new kind of fame by his lectures here. They are incomparable.” The friendship was strengthened after Alexander’s return from Siberia, when William von Humboldt was now a widower and infirm. It ended only with death. In 1835 Alexander, who had already survived Goethe and so many of his contemporaries, had the inexpressible grief of seeing his brother’s deathbed. “‘Think often upon me,’ he said, the day before yesterday, ‘but think with cheerfulness. I was very happy; even to-day was a glorious day for me, for love is the highest good. I shall soon be with my mother, and shall have an insight into a higher order of the world.’” “There is no trace of hope left to me,” is Alexander’s comment as he relates this. “I did not think that my old days had so many tears left to them.” Yet he bore up nobly against the blow. His health improved as he grew older, and when he was eighty-five he allowed himself only four hours for sleep. During the latter years of his life he had rooms assigned him in the royal palace at Potsdam. But his affection for the king did not make him false to the cause of liberty; and the last public act of his life was to register his vote for the Liberal candidates at Berlin. A Scotch gentleman, who saw him a few years ago, found him keenly alive to the progress of science, and to the names of our rising men in England. Sometimes the admiration felt for him led to amusing incidents. Dr. Carus the elder, the eminent craniologist, heard some years ago a report that Baron Humboldt was dead, and wrote immediately to Berlin to secure a cast of the skull. He received a letter in reply from the philosopher himself, to say that he was not yet dead; and that, with all possible willingness to oblige a friend, he hoped to keep his head a few years longer, and work in the cause of truth.

Humboldt is essentially the pupil of Goethe in his greatness

and in his shortcomings, as the poet of science, and as the man to whom science made up the whole of humanity. A belief in the power of nature over man, in law as predominant over will, and in the education of circumstances, is the keystone of his philosophy. His treatment of the sciences of life is therefore imperfect and crude. He believed that mind and character are affected by climatic changes, and dependent on elevation and temperature; and he established the unity of the human race on the ruins of human identity. In all this he was partly no doubt the unconscious follower of Cabanis and Helvetius, and in part misled by a generous error of the heart, which persuaded him that a common descent was the only basis of human brotherhood. But the same flaw is perceptible in his views on other sciences, and it only widened with age. His apologue of the Rhodian Genius defends the doctrine of a vital principle, but he declared, in his later editions, that he had renounced the belief. The whole sum of human energies appeared to him nothing more than could be expressed in a chemical formula. The depressing influence of these views appears now and then in detached sentences of his works, and he clearly was most at home where the life around him was least intelligent. “Whoever has saved himself,” he says, “out of the stormy waves of life, will gladly follow me into the forest thicket, through the illimitable steppe, and upon the high ridges of the chains of the Andes . . . The world is perfect everywhere, where man and his misery do not come.”

But this intense appreciation of nature and of its immutable laws—his weakness on one side—was his glory and strength on another. The discovery that degrees of elevation have their own appropriate Flora, like degrees of latitude, easy as it seems, could have been made only by one who started with the conception that nature was simple and uniform. And yet it is not by single discoveries that such a man as Humboldt ought to be measured. His was one of those rare minds—more than ever precious in an age of minute observation—who span what seems the impassable gulf between separate sciences. With the sympathies of universality, he tracked the growth of scientific inquiry through all the centuries, and united those results which had once been scattered through all space, into a single stately structure. His *Kosmos* is the *Divina Commedia* of the visible world; and, if it lack a portion of the spiritual glory of its prototype, it is also free from the circles of suffering. No doubt the conditions of such a work imply that it will be transitory, like all intellectual results, whilst the artist appeals to the eternal elements of humanity. Humboldt’s works have, one by one, been superseded in the technical sense as manuals; but, as they cease to be the exact record of fact, they become more vividly than before complete landmarks of thought, and future generations will measure us by the standard of the great patriarch of science.

#### PLUMP FOR PENATES.

POOR Mr. Haig! The Electors of Middlesex have treated him with gross injustice. To exclude him they have departed from their universal rule, and have disregarded qualifications which, in every other constituency in the country, would have ensured success. It is always said that the freeholders of the Tower Hamlets have the election of Middlesex in their hands. And yet Mr. Haig was two Tower Hamlet members in one. He combined the profound insignificance of Butler with the matchless impudence of Ayrton. But it was the wife and ten children that ruined him. He lacked that racier element of character which is no doubt the recommendation of Mr. Thomas Duncombe and Mr. Edwin James, and which, acting on a consciousness of common interest, always induces the publicans to vote for the sinners. But though we have not to rejoice over his success, he has at least put it in our power to indulge in a lively sympathy for his failure. Those touching domestic details which he vouchsafed give us the rare privilege of learning the tragic sequel of a defeated candidate’s experiences. In other cases we can only give reins to our imaginations. How Mr. Wortley expressed himself when he read in the *Times* that delicate reminder of a biography he knew too well, must always remain a matter of conjecture. The sorrows and the joys of Mr. White’s enforced privacy are veiled in mystery: “we know not of his destiny, nor where his smile now strays,” nor how he continues to gratify that *prurigo plaudendi* which was the principal feature of his character before he shuffled off this political coil. Does he saunter along the Plymouth Docks with portly stride, ever and anon ejaculating a sad, broken, solitary cheer? Can he let his wife read through family prayers without interpolating an occasional “Hear, hear?” Has the Thynne family had the common and obvious courtesy to comfort Mr. Nicoll by a large order for paletots? Does Mr. Hudson find his aristocratic acquaintance at the Carlton as extensive and as cordial as they were a month ago? These things we cannot know. But Mr. Haig’s own domestic picture—the cool, a-year earned after long effort—the ten children—and, in the foreground, the wife—tell us only too plainly of the domestic fate reserved for the defeated aspirant.

No doubt Mr. Haig is not thinskin, and is prepared to minister unrepiningly to the amusement of his fellow-creatures. If for the next six months the *gamins* of Regent’s-park always receive him with, “Please, sir, will yer give us an order for the ‘ouse?” he will bear it as becomes the father of ten children,



who knows what boys are. The shower of chaff with which his presence will enliven the Chancery-bar may be avoided by a judicious indisposition. The solicitors may no doubt be brought to pardon him, for a long experience will have taught them that common sense is no necessary qualification of a lawyer. But the wit of barristers and the wrath of attorneys will be as nothing to the "I told you how it would be, Mr. H.," of the domestic circle. We may imagine—we will not trust ourselves to describe—the feelings of the crestfallen candidate, when those three formidable documents, the banker's book, the election bill, and the list of nursery desiderata, lie before him, and salt is rubbed into the mental smart by a tender conjugal hand. Mr. Haig may rest assured that the heart of every *paterfamilias* in the kingdom—*haud ignarus mali*—is bleeding for his miserable fate.

It may be some comfort to him, however, to know that he has been a very wholesome example, and has been shut out of Parliament for Parliament's good. He is the extreme instance of the great political danger of the present day—the local candidate. In the entire absence of all political feeling, the tendency to elect on purely parochial considerations is gaining more and more ground with the constituencies. Non-residence has become almost as fatal to a candidate as it is to a clergyman; and so fully alive are candidates to the value of the residential claim, that they plead it with far more emphasis than any mere political qualification. Sir James Elphinstone has secured his seat at Portsmouth by taking a house at Southsea. Mr. Mitford has ousted the late member for Midhurst with no earthly recommendation except that he lives within the boundaries of the borough. Mr. Doulton thought that a familiarity with the Lambeth sewers was an ample ground for claiming the Lambeth seat. And during the present and the last election, half the small boroughs in the kingdom distinguished themselves by returning an attorney, or a tea-dealer, or a miller of local celebrity. Mr. Haig, who asked to be returned because his wife was as a fruitful vine in the neighbourhood of the Regent's-park, was merely exaggerating the prevailing tendency. It may very fairly be said that this is not always the fault of the constituencies. They very often have no other alternative except some perfumed dandy who bears an historic name, or a muddle-headed Cæsus, whose wife is anxious for the *entrée* of Cambridge House. The repulsive character of the game of politics as it is now played out, the cruel necessity of choosing between leaders whose character for honesty is equally blasted, and whose tactics are equally shameless, has already brought us to the verge of the difficulty into which America is inextricably plunged. Men of talent and character shrink from entering so muddy an arena, where the victor is as much bespattered as the vanquished. It has long been a matter of sorrowful remark, that in the younger strata of the House of Commons, the raw material out of which statesmen can be made is fearfully deficient. Ever since the time when the leadership of that House was divided between Mr. Disraeli and Lord John Russell, the supply of promising young men, constant up to that time, almost absolutely ceased. Of the grave evils which this want will engender at some future day, it is impossible to speak too seriously; and among the gravest of them will be the deluge of local notabilities that will flood the House of Commons. Few more disastrous events can be imagined for England than that her affairs should be administered as affairs are now administered in the St. Pancras Vestry or a Kentish turnpike trust. But the incapacity of a set of "resident" members will scarcely be their worst disqualification. They live in an atmosphere of moral corruption, compared to which an atmosphere of open bribery is pure and healthy. The resident member's whole life must be a life of bunkum. He exists in an incessant canvas. All the degradation, all the dishonesty, all the forced flattery of the meanest as well as the best, which is exacted by that constitutional saturnalia, is his daily task. His minutest actions, every word he drops, the pettiest details of his daily life or of his religious observances, are subject to the constant scrutiny of hundreds of jealous constituents, who like nothing better than to show off their exceptional power on their superiors in rank. The result is, that whatever he does, whether he eats or drinks or goes to church, he does it with the fear of the coming election before his eyes. No man's moral fibre can stand a life of acting. If he consents to endure it he must become a hypocrite at last; and a House of Commons of resident members would be a House of Commons of indurated hypocrites. It is not, of course, to be hoped that an isolated election will do much to stem the stream of a general tendency; but still the contemptuous rejection of a Haig is always to be counted for gain.

#### THE ACQUITTAL OF MR. SICKLES.

IT has often appeared to us necessary to criticize with some severity the extravagant manner in which grave questions are treated by popular writers. It is not, in our eyes, a small thing to hold up nations and institutions to ridicule and contempt; but there are some people whose zeal to make fools of themselves is so ardent that they not only justify but outrun the wildest flight of the most audacious caricature. We had cherished a hope that the American part of *Martin Chuzzlewit* stood in the same relation to public life in the United States as the Circumlocution Office stands in towards Downing-street; but the Americans are determined to destroy any illusions which we might

have been inclined to cherish as to the demeanour of a great nation. Of all the grotesque exhibitions of human folly which it has been our lot to observe, the demonstrations which followed the acquittal of Mr. Sickles appear to us to have been the most outrageous. The external manifestations of the feelings of the people would have been surprising in any case. To hear a verdict received with "wild tumultuous thrilling hurrahs" must be a new sensation. Something of the sort, as Lord Macaulay tells us, took place at the trial of the Seven Bishops, though even that occasion was not looked upon as affording an entire justification for such a proceeding; but it would have been a sad trial of our patriotism if the eloquent historian had had to relate that sentimental colonels had insisted on kissing our constitutional martyrs, that the hackney-coachmen of the period had fought for the honour of carrying them home, or, above all, that Somers and Pemberton had marked their sense of the occasion by standing on the benches and shouting "go it" to an enthusiastic audience. There must be something exquisitely satisfactory to the feelings of a gentleman in the position of a barrister who enjoys the privilege of an extensive practice in American criminal courts. The intense interest which all his movements excite, and the lively manner in which they are described, cannot fail to afford him a manly satisfaction. We attempted, a week or two ago, to illustrate the sort of tone which his position obliges him to adopt in his speeches. The sympathy testified for such efforts by the congenial spirit of the reporters must be a source of never-failing gratification. Men who talk about the soft gush of the Sabbath twilight, and revel in the stories of Absalom and Amnon, must read with delight such sentences as these—"Mr. Brady became pale, nervous, and agitated. Mr. Stanton, unable to repress the emotions of his big heart, is described as having almost rivalled David when he danced before the ark of the Tabernacle. The usual stability" (another and less complimentary report reads "stolidity") of Mr. Phillips gave way, and covering his face with his hands, he wept like a child. Mr. Meagher, "in the exuberance of his heart, clapped people on the back, and asked if it was not 'glorious!'" Mr. Meagher might well think the scene glorious, for, as far as we can understand it, it must have borne a striking resemblance to Conciliation Hall gone mad. Barristers, however, are not the only persons whose enthusiasm has a chance of being immortalized by "Our Own Correspondent" in America—"the gaoler wept deeply, and could not understand Mr. Meagher when he consoled with him on losing his tenant." "A vendor of oranges, named Scott, rushed into the house where Mr. Sickles is a guest, and deposited a large box of his choicest stock in the drawing-room, to express his sympathy. Several other tradesmen did the same thing." Is it too uncharitable to suggest that sympathy and business may have met together, and testimonials and advertisements have kissed each other?

The "real sentiments" of the jury, as expressed "in the unrestrained freedom of conversation," are, perhaps, as curious as any part of the popular display. The foreman bestowed on Mr. Sickles "an affectionate greeting," expressing at the same time, with regard to himself, the double conviction that his Maker would ratify his verdict, and his latest posterity honour his memory—a comfortable persuasion, which it is equally impossible to disturb or to share. Mr. Hopkins, "the wag and mimic among them," playfully observed that he would have used a howitzer instead of a revolver. For the credit of American wit, we can only hope that the twenty-three dreary days of the trial had drained Mr. Hopkins' resources. His stock of jokes must have been running very low indeed when he saw any fun in the observation attributed to him. Mr. McDermott, a third juror, was made of sterner stuff. After all his woes, the staple bunkum of his country came from him in its native raciness:—"I want you, sir, to tell the people of New York that the citizens of Washington are not behind those of any other part of the country in their devotion to the family altar." Indeed, this admirable sentiment seems to have been the leading one in the minds of the jury, for several of them remarked that by their verdict they had vindicated their wives, their children, and their homes. In fact, their unanimity was touching—they "only left the box to satisfy the scruples of some eccentric person who made difficulty about serving after he had taken his oath." We are not quite sure whether this remarkable sentence means that one of the gentlemen in question felt some scruples about perjuring himself out of respect for the family altar; but if it does, we can only express our regret that so base an exception should have marred the harmony of this auspicious event. It is, however, hard to repress a feeling that the eagerness of the jury to sanction Mr. Sickles's proceedings does not show excessive confidence in the virtue of their wives. An extreme touchiness about ropes is not usually found amongst those whose relations have died in their beds.

Seriously speaking, the extravagant absurdity of the exhibitions which this miserable trial has produced must not allow us to shut our eyes to the fact that its whole history is more disgraceful to the nation in which it occurred than any political or military disaster. It cannot be regarded without sorrow and indignation. What, after all, has been done to earn the insane triumph which has made Washington the laughing-stock of Europe? Why was Mr. Sickles congratulated, kissed, feasted, stared at, and gratified by being made the gazing-stock of a wretched mob, which crowded for hours into the house of the

friend with whom he stayed? Why were his counsel and the jury serenaded? Why did Mr. Stanton skip like David? and Mr. Meagher renew his youth and recal the glories of the cabbage-garden? The sole title of the poor wretch to be the centre of all this insane mummerly was, that his wife had lost her virtue, and that he, in a paroxysm of blind and weak ferocity, deprived her seducer of life as he lay helpless and unarmed on the ground before him. A man driven to frenzy by the actual sight of his wife's infamy might be pardoned for taking an adulterer's life. A man who felt that nothing but a mortal duel could settle such a quarrel, would act upon a principle which, if wicked, would at least be bold; but to shoot down a defenceless man—to fire at him shot after shot as he lay on the ground disabled—is a mean, weak, cowardly action. That a jury should justify and a mob applaud it, is a national disgrace. The sentiment which inspired Mr. Sickles's admirers obviously was that he had done a spirited thing. Is it possible to imagine a more disgraceful state of public opinion? It goes far to show that the very springs of action are corrupted, and the leading notions of right and wrong either effaced or dimmed, that such a man as Mr. Sickles should be looked upon as a hero. His apotheosis is a practical denial of the fact that self-control and obedience to the laws, to say nothing of the forgiveness of injuries, belong to the character of a good man. Any cur can bite when it is angry and when it meets a smaller cur than itself. Any man can kick his wife or beat his children. Any scoundrel can run a knife into his enemy's heart; and if, thinking that public feeling will back him in doing so, or prevented by his rage for the moment from calculating consequences, he does it openly, the character of the action is just the same as if, in a healthier state of society, or in a less excited frame of mind, he did the same thing in secret. Mr. Sickles's spirited proceeding does not rise above this level. He gave way to frantic passion, and under its influence committed a very violent, a very wicked, and what on the face of it would seem to have been a very cowardly crime; and for this he is worshipped—as awkwardly, it is true, as Mumbo Jumbo himself—in the capital of a nation which claims to be the first amongst the peoples of the world.

It may be said that we in England have no right to speak in this tone of such a proceeding in a foreign country. We think otherwise. It reads us a most useful lesson. Education of a certain sort is as universal in America as the suffrage itself; the prosperity of the classes which live upon wages is certainly far greater than that of the corresponding class here, and their intelligence is probably not less; yet we see how far the nation appreciates the character and the authority of law, we see what is its standard of decency and propriety of demeanour. Intense vulgarity of feeling is not a slight evil, nor is its comic side the most important part of it. The essence of vulgarity lies in the absence or the loss of an instinctive appreciation of beauty and dignity. No greater loss can well be incurred by any nation, for there is hardly any safeguard to the weighty matters of the law which is so effective.

It is not merely the American part of the transaction which requires comment. Some of the remarks made upon it in the *Times* appeared to us most objectionable. That Mr. Sickles was guilty of murder, both by the law of England and by that of America, there cannot be the faintest shadow of doubt, nor can we even imagine on what grounds a doubt can be suggested; yet the *Times* appeared not only to palliate the verdict that was given, but to intimate that a similar verdict might be expected, and ought to be tolerated in England. We cannot find language strong enough to express our detestation of such a doctrine. It is, indeed, perfectly true that men unaccustomed to legal discussions may occasionally reach their conclusions by extra-legal methods when they are made judges, and this may, under some circumstances, be advantageous; but this advantage is only indirect and incidental. If juries are ever persuaded to believe that they are to make the law, and not to administer it, the consequences will be absolutely fatal to law and justice. We cannot conceive how a writer of eminence and influence can bring himself to speak slightly of the obligation of a solemn oath to give a true verdict according to the law, and to speak with a sort of rollicking approval of verdicts of "served him right." Whatever such a verdict may be called in leading articles, it is in truth a grievous and a heinous crime; and the man who pronounces it must bear about with him the guilt of perjury to the latest day of his life.

#### TALL TALK.

THE townsmen of Newcastle have expressed their regret that England did not interfere, in the spirit of Cromwell, in the Continental troubles which broke out in 1848. The contrast thus suggested between the greatness for good or evil of the Protector, and the littleness and selfishness of the statesmen of ten years ago, is melancholy enough. But some consolation may possibly be found in noticing that, if our policy is not grander than that of other nations, we at least possess enough of quiet good sense among our officials to do our little political jobs in a prosaic, unpretending way. As an example of a mode of performing business which happily is as yet impossible among our own diplomatists, let us take the demonstrations of renewed amity between the United States and Paraguay. There had

been in due course difficulties between the great and the small Republic. These difficulties had been adjusted by the natural expedient of an indemnity paid down in money by the weaker to the stronger Power, and it only further needed that heaven and earth should, with adequate solemnity, be called to witness this mighty fact in Transatlantic history. The difference which we observe between ourselves and the improved edition of our race which circulates beyond the ocean, is not so much in the things we do, as in the way we talk about them when they are done. Neither the will nor the power to bully a feeble State is likely to be wanting to the countrymen of the Minister whose spirited foreign policy formed one of his strongest claims to confidence. But although it is quite feasible to extort a pecuniary compensation for alleged injuries by threatening to bombard the capital of the offending Potentate, we should scarcely expect our representatives so to combine sweetness of word with energy of deed as to persuade those who suffered by their importunity to look, and speak, and act as if they loved parting with their money better than the rest of the world loves acquiring it. Such, however, seems to be the result which American diplomacy has produced in its late negotiations with Paraguay. All difficulties were adjusted; the indemnity was paid; and nothing remained but for the feeble Republic to express with suitable enthusiasm its sense of the honour done to it by the great nation which condescended to accept its dollars. The President of the Argentine Confederation was equal to the magnificent opportunity. If he combines, as he appears to do, the grandeur of the old Castilian and of the modern American styles of eloquence, it must be owned that nature had adapted him with singular felicity for his high function.

The President Urquiza, the honoured representative of the United States, the illustrious Commodore Bowlin, and a party of distinguished citizens and sailors of the most free and powerful nation of the earth, and also of citizens of some other nations which are equally free but not so powerful, celebrated the happy consummation by a solemn banquet. It belonged to the part of President Urquiza to propose the health of Washington. "I humbly bow before the Supreme Dispenser of all good and glory for having vouchsafed to me this day of intense satisfaction and of immense honour." Surely this is speaking up to the great occasion. The only event of our time that can be at all compared to it was when Marshal Pelissier, in the days of cordial alliance between France and England, proposed the health of Lord Gough at a dinner in the lines before Sebastopol. But a French Marshal, in spite of the high scenic capabilities of his nation, is likely to prove a man of action rather than of speech; and besides, what was "le vainqueur du Punjab" to the founder of American independence? The talent of the French for neatly turning epigrams under discomposing circumstances is indeed well known; and between the soldiers who fight well, and the journalists who invent good things for them, the dramatic character of the French army has been raised to a point which will need a good deal of literary as well as of warlike ability to maintain. Some Zouaves lately, in Piedmont, were washed out of their beds by a mountain torrent. Perhaps what they really said on the occasion might have been equalled in our own army; but as we cannot have special correspondents everywhere, it might happen that such an incident would fail to suggest to any onlooker an appropriate speech. But in France the art of improving upon facts is much more generally practised. It is a pity to spoil one of the most effective scenes of history, but still inexorable truth denies that the words "the Guard dies, but never surrenders," were anything else but an invention of some ingenious apologist for Waterloo. The best authorities declare that the Guard confined itself at the time in question to the uttering of profane oaths. But taking even the French reports of their own cleverness as strictly true, they cannot for one moment be compared with the all-sufficient readiness of the Americans. Meet any vessel of their national marine, and get into a little squabble, or merely exchange courtesies, with its captain, and see what ponderous artillery he will bring to bear upon you. And if the captain happens to be sick, the first lieutenant will do your business quite as readily. Let a Britisher go where he will beyond the Atlantic, every functionary, civil, military, or naval, is always prepared at the shortest notice to chaw him up into the most minute fragments without the least appearance of an unusual effort. President Urquiza is immeasurably beyond any Britisher, but still his speech is only good until one has heard the answer to it. "Suffer me," he exclaims, "to blend the prayers and sentiments inspired by this auspicious moment in one deep health to the immortal memory of our venerated Washington." This might be thought fine, or even too fine, at the London Tavern in benighted Europe; but in the New World freedom and eloquence have been developed at a pace which would very much surprise Washington. The United States Commissioner, in responding, remembers that the homage paid to him belongs, not to himself, but to the enlightened, liberal, and humane policy of the glorious nation which he serves. Were it not for this consideration the ovation offered to him "would well nigh burst a heart already full to overflowing." With a view to prevent all possibility of such a lamentable occurrence as the bursting of a heart overfed with compliments, it is the custom in England to sing *Non nobis* after dinner. But this practice only serves to illustrate the moral decrepitude of our old community. Unless we specially appoint and pay somebody to give to God the glory due to Him, the chances are that the whole will be



appropriated to the Government by the Lord Chancellor. But in young America we see, among many other refreshing spectacles, this one of great men who are also modest. Veneration, like all other virtues and graces, grows spontaneously in that happy land; while in this miserable exhausted soil we with difficulty raise a feeble and forced, but very costly crop. "A kind Providence opened the heart of the President of Paraguay to convictions which shall only grow cold in him with life itself." If the illustrious Commodore Bowlin had commanded an English squadron, the credit of opening the heart of an offending president to conviction would have been divided between that officer and Sir John Pakington, in the proportion which the merit of merely doing a thing bears to that of talking about it in the House of Commons. The recognition of Providence would have been left to find its place in the musical arrangements, while the efficiency of the navy would have been made a prominent topic in one or more of the leading speeches of the evening.

As Englishmen have had no Washington, it is impossible to say what their emotions might be at finding the name and memory of such a hero cherished among a foreign people. Lord John Russell, perhaps, as the founder of constitutional liberty, may deserve to be thus honoured in Sardinia. What ought to be our sensations on opening, in a public library at Turin, an Italian version of the life of Charles James Fox? If we were eloquent, and also pious, we should describe ourselves as feeling "like a missionary, who, in a strange land, should unexpectedly meet with the cross and the altar, and upon the latter a copy of the Gospel in an unknown tongue." Thus should we speak if we conceived that the entire civilized world was eagerly listening for our slightest utterance. If eloquence were less peremptorily demanded by the occasion, we might perhaps remember that a missionary who found a copy of the Gospel in an unknown tongue, could not tell whether it was the Gospel or the Koran, unless indeed Providence had interposed to have the book marked "Holy Bible" in gilt letters on the back. Missionaries of the United States, it is satisfactory to find, are much more tolerant of rival churches than those who go forth from among ourselves. If a delegate of Exeter Hall were to find in Central Africa a cross and an altar, and a book in an unknown tongue, he would zealously abolish every vestige of that Romish superstition which in his eyes is more abominable than paganism itself. So far from "knowing that he was among brethren, and kneeling in pious reverence," he would be aroused to vigilant hostility by thus discovering tokens of the presence of another of the same trade. But "missionaries of that Christian democracy of which Washington was the founder," are doubtless as much superior to other missionaries in zeal and liberality as American commodores and envoys are to European officers in smartness with sword, pen, and tongue. The missionary who has found the cross among a savage people "entertains no doubt of their future welfare, for he knows them to be on the right track." So the representative of the United States has confidence in the destinies of a people which admires Washington, and which has elected for its president Urquiza. "I feel satisfied that the most grateful prayer I can offer to heaven for your welfare will be that it may preserve a life so inseparably identified with the prosperity of the Argentine Confederation." Those who intercede with heaven for the welfare either of Presidents or of smaller people, are usually understood to include the preservation of life among the blessings they invoke. The existence of the King of Naples may not be necessary to his subjects' happiness, but still a prayer for his welfare would imply the prolongation of his life. The American Representative saw that wealth induced health, and after the manner of his countrymen, he proclaimed this grand discovery to all present and future generations. Transatlantic orators alone are capable of calling with proper emphasis upon heaven and earth to witness their promulgation of the newly ascertained truth that two and two make four.

#### ROYAL ACADEMY.

"SUNT bona, sunt quædam mediocria, sunt mala plura," is always true of the Royal Academy Exhibition. Good, bad, and indifferent are sure to make their appearance. It is difficult to compare different years, because the judgment is apt to be unduly influenced by the presence or absence of a few stars, in which the present year is perhaps rather deficient. Not indeed that the great names do not appear, for, with one or two exceptions, all will be found, but they do not seem to be in great force. Pre-Raphaelitism has rather lost the charm of novelty; and while Mr. Hunt does not exhibit, Mr. Millais can hardly be thought to have advanced, and Mr. Wallis has, we fear, retrograded. Sir E. Landseer seems to be hardly himself, Mr. Macleise is not so conspicuous as he has been in former years, and the portraits appear to occupy a more disproportionate amount of space than ever. The fine summers which we have enjoyed for the two last years ought, it might have been supposed, to have given a stimulus to landscape painting, but this does not appear to have been the case; and we do not remember to have ever seen an exhibition in which so few landscapes were to be found. Those which we have, however, are upon the whole good, and as they will be more easily disposed of than the rest of the Exhibition, we will clear the way by taking them first.

Mr. C. Stanfield and Mr. E. W. Cooke exhibit sea-pieces as

a matter of course. They are, however, by no means singular in this respect, and our two most celebrated painters of inland scenery, Mr. T. Creswick and Mr. Lee, have this year encroached upon their special domain. Mr. Lee's attempt is bold, and to a certain degree successful; his clear green sea, with its background of dark clouds, has simplicity and grandeur, and the sentiment of the scene is given without exaggeration and without trick. Whether the colouring is perfectly true to nature we are compelled to doubt, for it seems to us that sufficient regard has not been paid to the reflecting power of water. If we are not mistaken, the deep, pure green colour of the sea as here depicted is never seen except under a very colourless sky. The sea always reflects the general hue of that which is spread over it, and if the prevailing colour of the sky is blue, becomes blue itself, or, if dark grey or purple, assumes a corresponding blackness. There are, indeed, exceptions to this where the water is discoloured, as sometimes happens, near the shore, or where the spectator is looking down so immediately into the water that the transmitted light overrides the reflected light. The general aspect, however, of a clear deep sea can never contrast so strongly with the general aspect of the sky as it does in Mr. Lee's picture. Here and there the green colour will appear in tolerable purity, and it will everywhere modify, to a certain extent, the character of the reflections; but these latter always give the prevailing tone where the sky is either very blue or very black. The dark shades which have been introduced are, it will be observed, dark green rather than purple; and the consequence of this is, that they look like shadows rather than reflections, and give an air of opacity and solidity to the water. Shadows, it is quite true, do appear upon troubled water, and it is perfectly right that they should be represented; but it should be remembered that while reflections only appear upon polished surfaces, shadows appear upon any kind of surface, and consequently that, as far as conveying a just notion of the character of water is concerned, it is more important to make it evident that it is a reflecting body than one capable of causing or receiving shadows. The chief distinction, moreover, between a shadow and a reflection is that the colour of the latter may, and generally does, differ in kind from the colour of the reflecting substance, while the colour of the former differs only in degree, and not in kind, from that of the body in which it appears. This is, indeed, a slight overstatement, for owing to the influence of the atmosphere, a shadow does generally assume a tint of its own, but it is nevertheless true, roughly speaking, that such is the characteristic difference between shadows and reflections. Mr. Lee, accordingly, by combining a sea composed of different shades of green with a very dark purple sky, has given to the former an excessive appearance of opacity and solidity which would have been avoided if the water had been made to reflect the sky more faithfully. His sea looks, in fact, much as a carved and painted sea would look under similar circumstances. As regards his sky, moreover, we cannot help doubting whether any blue would ever be seen where the clouds are so intensely black and lurid. Up to a certain point, breaks of blue appear among the clouds, but this can hardly be the case where they are so extremely stormy and lowering as these.

Mr. E. W. Cooke, who has made the sea his especial study, is careful to give the different tints which appear upon a wave—different, that is to say, in kind as well as degree, as may be seen in his No. 388, "A Dutch Peon," &c. Such a sea, however, as he has here represented is a much less arduous task than Mr. Lee's—in the first place, because he has not attempted to represent such clear water, and, in the second place, because the dancing motion of water, interrupted by vessels and other objects about a harbour, is much more easily rendered than the great rolling waves of the ocean, such as Mr. Lee has undertaken. Mr. Clarkson Stanfield has the sort of facility and excellence in representing the sea which experience and taste must always confer. He is, however, rather too careless and too fond of generalizing; and is, in fact, of all living artists the most complete antithesis of the pre-Raphaelite school. His paintings are always marked by that kind of studied ease which is abhorrent to the pre-Raphaelite mind; and, provided he can reach a satisfactory general result, he seems to be remarkably indifferent to matters of detail. The sort of defect which arises from this may be seen in his "Coast of Brittany" (184) and "Maltese Xebec," &c. (237). In both the water is very fairly satisfactory at a cursory glance, so, at any rate, as not to interfere with the general effect; but in each it is deficient in character and individuality. In the former, the solemn, formal roll which marks the advance of waves is wanting; and in the latter, the water is rather that of an English estuary than of the Mediterranean. Mr. T. Creswick's "On Shore" seems to us to be, upon the whole, the most successful effort at surmounting the difficulties which sea views offer. In the first place, his sky, simpler and more colourless than Mr. Lee's, is in keeping with the quiet green of his sea; and in the second place, he has not shrunk from fairly representing the formality with which waves under ordinary circumstances advance. He has ventured to be simple and natural, and his painting expresses a just conviction that it is possible to satisfy without giving strongly marked "effects" of colour or light and shade.

Among views of inland scenery, or landscapes proper, Mr. T. Creswick's "Coming Summer" (96) seems to hold the highest place. Like all artists of eminence, Mr. Creswick affects a particular class of subjects and a particular kind of colouring, of

which this work is an admirable sample. He does not pretend to be striking or original, but is content to be pleasing and truthful. Yet "Coming Summer" deserves a close inspection. It is a work which will please much longer and more thoroughly than more pretentious paintings. Simple as it looks, it is of a kind which, when successful, is superior to all others, but upon which none but an artist of perfect taste and skill can safely venture. A deliberate survey of it will show that much of this charm depends upon the admirable composition. As regards composition, landscapes seem to divide themselves pretty much into two classes. There are, firstly, views of some conspicuous central object, of which Mr. G. Stanfield's fine painting of "The Castle of Chillon" (663) is a good instance, in which very little art is required. These, in fact, approach to the nature of portraits, and nothing more is for the most part necessary than that the accessories should not be too prominent. There are, secondly, views like this of Mr. Creswick's, in which there is no one object in itself of sufficient importance to constitute a picture, and in which consequently, the interest must be spread over and equalized throughout the whole painting. The problem which the artist has to solve in such cases is, how to maintain a balance and connexion of the parts without formality. With the view of attaining this, painters have sometimes adopted the principle of grouping objects so as to form a pyramid, or some figure approaching to a pyramid. This, however, is perhaps rather applicable to historical paintings than landscapes; and certainly, in many of the latter, it is not available to any great extent. Another way of getting over the difficulty is by arranging the lighting of the objects represented, rather than the objects themselves, in such a way that a graduated series of lights may lead up to some culminating point, and thus serve as a bond of union. It is, however, very difficult in many cases to carry out this principle without artifice so apparent as to interfere with the general effect. It is, moreover, evident that in subjects of a certain kind, such as sea-views, or long sweeps of undulating country, the whole notion of a culminating point, whether as the result of graduated lights or of pyramidally-arranged details, is opposed to the essential character and peculiar charm of such scenery; and any artifice employed to obtain such a result had consequently much better be omitted. There remains, however, the feeling that unity of some kind must be obtained—that a painting must be a group, a picture, in short, and not a number of pictures jumbled together upon one piece of canvas; and, if we reject the notion of a central point to which the lines should be made to converge, the only alternative will be to connect them in a horizontal line, more or less undulating, to avoid the danger of stiffness and formality. This, accordingly, is the kind of arrangement adopted by Mr. Creswick in the instance before us. His clump of trees are not in themselves sufficient to form a picture, and the eye is therefore carried along the cattle and figures on either side, which help to make up the interest of the whole. Among these, it may be observed, that magnitude and brilliancy serve to counterbalance each other. The trees, for instance, are bigger, but the figures are more brilliant, and the eye is, consequently, about equally caught by each. So complete is the equipoise between the former and the girl crossing the ford on a white horse that it would be very difficult to say which of the two is the more conspicuous object. It follows that in this kind of arrangement a sort of graduated scale of colour and size must be observed according as the objects approach or recede from the central line, about which the most important features are placed. The dead trunks of trees, for instance, which lie immediately in front, serve, as it is, just to add variety without being obtrusive. If, however, instead of them, some more conspicuous or interesting object had been introduced, the attention would have been unpleasantly distracted, as they are too far removed from the chief elements of the composition for the eye to dwell upon them without a break in the sense of continuity. Such as they are, however, they are too retiring to interfere. The most palpable defect in this, and all Mr. Creswick's paintings, seems to us to be the striated, fibrous texture of the clouds, which makes them look like cotton wool. The distinction, moreover, between clouds and blue sky is never sufficiently observed, and instead of the former appearing to float as distinct masses in a transparent liquid, there is generally an unsatisfactory confusion of the two. In Mr. Lee's works, of which there are three besides the study of waves, which we have already discussed, there is perhaps more life and character than in Mr. Creswick's, but there is not the same perfect simplicity, nor do they always give the impression of being quite so true to nature. The "Coast of Cornwall" (70) may possibly, as far as drawing goes, have been faithfully copied, but it is difficult to imagine that so large a mass of rocks, exposed to the action of the sea and weather, could retain such a smooth, uniform, brown tint; and it may be observed that the same colour is employed in "The Avenue at Youstone" (321) both for the road and the trunks of the trees, as if Mr. Lee had a special fondness for it. In "The Avenue" there is the less reason for this, as the trunks of old fir-trees are always, at least in part, of a richer red, though Mr. Lee does well to shrink from the exaggeration of this peculiarity into which some painters fall. There is, both in this picture and in "My Cottage near the Brook," a most attractive freshness of colouring, and an execution careful though not laboured.

Among landscapes of a less conspicuous order it is curious

to mark how completely the old classical brown trees have given way to pure greens. There was a time when a landscape was almost invariably autumnal in tint, but it is now, apparently, no less essential that its colours should be those of spring. Painters have no doubt done well to cancel the decree of ostracism under which the greens formerly suffered, but we cannot help thinking that spring is getting rather more than its due share of distinction. There is no blinking the fact that leaves do ultimately become red, yellow, and brown; and as it has now been abundantly asserted that they are of a pale pure green in spring, we trust that a painter will be found to enter the lists again in behalf of the now unfashionable season. Corn fields indeed do find champions, for beside the three Messrs. Linnell, whose prescriptive province they are, Mr. C. P. Knight has produced an admirable scene, entitled "Barley Harvest on the Welsh Coast" (190). Among the numerous little pictures of green copes and hedge-rows it is extremely difficult to distinguish, but the sunlight seems to be very good in "Summer" (86), by S. R. Percy; and the effect of pebbles seen through clear water is cleverly given in a "Mill-stream," by N. O. Lupton. There is a "Sea Coast at West Lutworth" (318), by J. F. Cropsey, in which the rocks in the foreground are painted with great care and delicacy. Mr. R. Drabble exhibits an "Early Morning on the Derwent" (415), which is distinguished by its quiet and harmonious colouring, though the pink light upon the mountain-top is perhaps rather too decided for a sky so cold and colourless. To Mr. G. Stanfield we have already had occasion to advert, and need only add that his colours are invariably pleasing. He must, however, be upon his guard against limiting himself to a circumscribed circle of browns and greens. Nos. 13 and 173, by F. B. Hay, are prettily painted; but there is perhaps a tinge of affectation in the figures. The clear glowing atmosphere of Italy is especially well represented in No. 173. Upon Mr. Oakes' merits we feel some difficulty in deciding, for though he appears to drag difficulties rather ostentatiously into his foregrounds, and not to paint them quite satisfactorily after all, yet some of his smaller pieces, such as "Twilight" (204), are invested with a singular air of solemnity and stillness. Mr. J. Brett's "Val d'Aosta" (908), is an attempt to give the full effect of bright sunshine in a clear atmosphere by mere force of colour. Such an attempt must be a failure. The difference between light and darkness is not merely one of colour, and it is only so far as it does consist of a difference of colour that a painter is competent to reproduce it. The desire to advance beyond this limit must lead to falsification. Mr. Brett's shadows are too blue, his light is too golden; and the consequence is, that instead of suggesting light and shade as he might have done if he had been satisfied with less, the material employed is disagreeably obtrusive. His shadows and lights proclaim themselves too palpably to be mere paint. To some persons the mere evidence of labour which works such as this display seems to be pleasing apart from the result obtained, but we must confess to a different feeling. It is disagreeable to see so much toil thrown away upon a scene which is singular, but neither grand nor beautiful. Except a mere discipline of patience, it is difficult to see what Mr. Brett has gained. Had the same amount of pains been bestowed upon some important element of ordinary landscape which requires special study, such as an oak-tree, a troubled sea, or a rocky mountain, a fund of knowledge would have been obtained which would ever afterwards have been useful; but the greater part of the landscape in question is composed of insignificant details, which are not connected with any of the leading types of natural scenery. A fine oak-tree, elaborately painted, is a useful and instructive study; but patches of grass and rows of young poplars can teach nothing, or next to nothing. Of this style of minute and careful painting, "A quiet Pool in Glen Falloch" (933), by W. B. Leader, is a much happier instance. That which can be rendered has not, in it, been sacrificed to that which cannot.

(To be continued.)

#### ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

SINCE our last notice of the Covent Garden Opera, Mr. Gye has produced works possessing attractions more legitimate in their character than could be afforded either by the *Sonnambula* or the *Trovatore*. Although we could very well have dispensed with Verdi's *Rigoletto*, which has been given twice, we presume that this musically uninteresting work was reproduced rather in deference to the taste of some portion of Mr. Gye's regular subscribers than with any idea that it would be likely to be acceptable to the general musical public. It is a curious, but we believe an acknowledged fact, that the performance of a really classical work—such for instance as *Don Giovanni* or *Fidelio*—always commands audiences of quite a different character from that which generally attends the ordinary run of operatic representations. The Italian Opera in England has always been, and still is, such a creature of fashion that it quite fails to be any index of the real musical character of the nation; and it is only on rare occasions, when operas like those we have mentioned are given, that it attracts many genuine amateurs who cannot afford often to indulge in so expensive a luxury. The revival, however, of the *Gazza Ladra*, which had not been heard in England for several years, is an important step in the right direction upon the part of the Covent Garden management. Rossini's

music, its frequent text, and most of its freshness and it is a writer's notions of perfection music to a somewhat of their exemplification by the

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music, in spite of its faults, its mannerisms, its carelessness, its frequent want of sympathy with the sentiments of the text, and many other objections which can be urged against it, is most unmistakably the work of a great master. Its exquisite freshness, geniality, and spirit must always make it welcome, and it is surprising that the works of the greatest Italian Opera writer should be comparatively neglected for the feeble productions of his followers, who have only succeeded in imitating his imperfections, while they have reduced the school of Italian music to the low rank in art which it at present occupies. It is a somewhat trite observation that the art of a people is a reflex of their national character; and we can have no more remarkable exemplification of its truth than is afforded in the present day by the musical and political degradation of the Italian race.

There is, perhaps, no opera of the composer which is better adapted to display the excellences of Mr. Gye's company, as at present constituted, than Rossini's *Gazza Ladra*. It is essentially an opera of *ensemble*, containing, if we are not mistaken, more concerted music than any other work of the same master. It has been said that the mannerisms of which Rossini can fairly be accused are, perhaps, less perceptible in this opera than in any other of his productions; but we cannot agree with this criticism. There are no airs more characteristic of his peculiarities than "Di piacer" and "Il mio piano è preparato"—no more striking example of his part-writing than the favourite and well-known canon "O nume benefico." The music, even in these days of grand opera, when the difficulties of such works as *Le Prophète* and *L'Etoile du Nord* have to be encountered, is anything but easy of execution. In Venice, where it was originally brought out, sixty rehearsals were considered necessary.

The story of the *Maid and the Magpie* must be familiar to our readers in so many shapes, that it will be unnecessary for us to enter at all into the particulars of the plot. Of the performance, however, of the opera we are glad to be able to speak in very high terms. And first let us remark that the manner in which the orchestra throughout acquitted itself was beyond all praise. The marvellous point, brilliancy, and precision with which the fine overture was given displayed an excellence unattainable by any other band with which we are acquainted, and, as a matter of course, necessitated an encore. Mr. Costa's conducting, in opera at least, is so far superior to any that has come within our experience, that we question very much whether even the Covent Garden orchestra under another directorship would attain anything like the same efficiency. The execution of the concerted music, upon which, as we have remarked, the effect of the opera mainly rests, left nothing to be desired—chorus, band, and principals working most admirably together. If we particularize at all, we should be inclined to cite the finale to the first act as worthy of especial commendation. We have no reason to modify the favourable opinion we have already expressed as to Madlle. Lotti's capabilities as a singer. Mr. Gye may consider himself extremely fortunate in having engaged a lady who, although at present far inferior to Madame Bosio, is nevertheless capable of filling so respectably the gap which she has left. If we are not mistaken, Madlle. Lotti is in a state of progress, and will, as was the case with Madame Bosio herself, eventually reach a point of excellence much higher than that she has already attained. She appeared to least advantage in the well-known elaborate cavatina, "Di Piacer," where the florid divisions of which Rossini is so fond seemed to us somewhat beyond her powers of execution. In the rest of the opera, however, we have little else but praise to accord to her. Her duet with Madame Didiée (Pippo) at the beginning of the second act, "Elben per mia memoria," was excellently sung, and accordingly encored; and in the concerted music she was most efficient, especially in the scene where Ninetta is led to execution.

Madame Didiée's Pippo was admirable. Although we could not help wishing for Alboni in the drinking song of the first act, which was always so certain to be encored, Madame Didiée looked the character of the farmer's boy so well, acted throughout with such spirit, and sang the music in such musicianlike style, that it must have been a very fastidious critic indeed who was not content with her performance. Signor Gardoni sings Rossini's music even better than we had anticipated. In the florid air, "Vieni fra queste braccia," he executed the passages with great clearness and precision, and indeed throughout was a most efficient Giannetto. Signor Ronconi's extraordinary and versatile powers of acting are so well known, that it will be sufficient to tell our readers that he invested the part of the Podesta with his usual individuality, and was more than ordinarily comic in the scene where he receives the news of Fernando's desertion. It unfortunately, however, cannot be disguised that this artist, in all other respects so admirable, possesses one serious defect which interferes most materially with the pleasure which we should otherwise derive from his great genius. We allude, of course, to the falsetness and uncertainty of his intonation, which he seems unable to overcome, and which made itself painfully felt in the earlier portion of the opera. Whether this is to be attributed to a radical defect of ear, or to some physical infirmity of the vocal organs, we are unable to say; but we regard it as an extraordinary instance of the force of genius, that in spite of this fundamental obstacle to his success, Signor Ronconi should have been able to achieve for himself a position of such acknowledged greatness upon the lyric stage. His fluent style of vocalization, how-

ever, contrasted favourably with that of Signor Debassini, who is not great as a Rossini singer. It is no very adverse criticism to say that the Fernando of this latter gentleman falls far short of that of Tamburini, who, with Grisi and Lablache, used to produce so great an effect in "O nume benefico." We noticed that in some places Signor Debassini altered the more difficult passages to suit the requirements of his voice. He is, however, a painstaking and valuable artist, and his voice, although scarcely flexible enough for Rossini's arpeggio passages, is powerful and effective. We must not conclude our notice of the *Gazza Ladra* without giving a few words of praise to Signor Tagliafico. His masterly assumption of the smaller parts is so striking that criticism is invariably unanimous upon this point, and his impersonation of Fabrizio, the farmer, is only another added to the list of his numerous successful creations. We may perhaps mention that the *mise en scène* is, as usual, of first-rate excellence, the opening scene being remarkably pretty.

Meyerbeer's *Huguenots* was chosen for the *rentrée* of Madame Grisi, and has already been given twice, the cast being in all respects the same as last year. Although it cannot be pretended that Madame Grisi's voice is all that it was some years ago, time has, however, treated it with a very tender hand; and, indeed, for a considerable period scarcely any alteration has been perceptible. This year she seems to us to be in capital voice, better even than last season. Her duet with Marcel, on the night we were present, was admirable, and created quite a *furor*. Her acting is as intellectual and energetic as ever, and we have seldom seen anything finer than her bye-play in the scene where St. Bris arranges the massacre. Signor Mario was rather husky in the first act. He sang the septet in the duel scene, however, with immense firmness and vigour; and his celebrated duet with Madame Grisi was so grandly rendered by both artists that they were most enthusiastically recalled. Madlle. Marai, who, we believe, has been lately "starring" as *prima donna* at one of the theatres in Rome, is scarcely equal to the part of the Queen. The same remark is true of M. Zelger's Marcel. He sings well, doubtless, but is inclined to be rather monotonous. His duet with Valentine was his best performance. Tagliafico, as St. Bris, was admirable, and broke his sword in capital style. The chorus, oddly enough, was scarcely up to its accustomed excellence in the finale to the first act, after the receipt of the Queen's letter; nor was the Rataplan altogether as good as might have been wished. The quarrelling scene, however, was better than usual, and the Benediction, as well as the Bathus' chorus, was most effectively given. The arrangement of the scenery in the last act is new and effective, the front part of the stage representing the interior of the Cemetery, which is divided by a railing from the streets behind. These are the principal points which struck us as worthy of mention. Any attempt at minute criticism would be out of place, inasmuch as there is no opera in the repertoire of Covent Garden which, both as regards the music and performance, is more familiar to the public than Meyerbeer's *Huguenots*.

## REVIEWS.

### ABOUT'S QUESTION ROMAINE.\*

THE cleverest writer with the best stock of materials can tell us substantially nothing more of the Papal Government than we know already. When we have said that it is beyond all comparison the worst in the civilized world, and that its faults are necessarily inherent in it, there is really nothing more to say. But it is a considerable gain that the shortcomings of the temporal administration of Rome should be clearly stated by a trustworthy observer, and be grouped together in a form exceedingly pleasant to read and very convenient to remember. M. About has taken a great deal of pains to gain information on which he could rely, and no one acquainted with his previous writings could doubt that his quiet satire and witty good sense would find a very favourable field in the task of establishing the incompetence of priests to make men happy in this life. Perhaps in England we should distrust the accuracy and fairness of a writer who is so fond of epigrams, but it is the style into which French wit has tutored itself, and there is an air of candour in M. About's writing which persuades us to have a general confidence in him. Few books in modern days have been more entertaining, and all the merit is entirely M. About's own; for the subject is at once sad, commonplace, and paltry, and it requires extraordinary skill to make us care to hear a protracted statement of the details of ecclesiastical misgovernment.

In every part of his book M. About insists on the great superiority of the eastern to the western portion of the Pope's dominions. The Apennines form a barrier between, dividing the country longitudinally. On one side is the capital and its environs, with a soil almost uncultivated, and a population broken-hearted and utterly depressed by the system under which they are placed. On the other is a thriving district, with peasant proprietors, some germs of a middle class, and a great disposition everywhere evinced to substitute terrestrial prosperity for

\* *Le Question Romaine*. Par E. About. Bruxelles. 1859.

orthodox obedience to the clergy as the aim of life. M. About illustrates this difference in every way, because he wishes to convince his readers that one very practical and very easy reform might and should be effected at once. The Papal States ought to be confined to the west of the Apennines, even if the temporal power of the Pope is to be suffered to continue. What M. About seems to wish, however, is that the City of Rome alone should be left in the hands of the Pope, and that he should be supported there by the voluntary contributions of the Catholic world. It is scarcely conceivable that the Catholic theory should permit any one to go further than this. If the Pope were not Bishop of Rome, his claim to rule over his spiritual flock would be seriously impaired. M. About probably would see even this result with considerable indifference. He calls himself a very sincere Catholic; but he closes his book by the unorthodox remark that the head of the French churches ought to be in Paris; and apparently he would desire that the head of the State and the head of the Church should be the same person. He evidently considers having any head of the Church at all as a mere business arrangement; and he does not see why Louis Napoleon, who has been thought good enough to aid in the really serious task of helping France to grow rich, should not be also thought good enough to discharge so very trivial a function as that of being the head of the Church.

The opinions of M. About are therefore guided rather by good worldly sense than by any ardent zeal for Catholicism. Indeed, to a devout Catholic, we do not see why this or any other attack on the Pope's temporal government should be convincing. For it is very possible to take issue with the critic on first principles, and ask why the Pope should make his subjects rich, or comfortable, or happy? He is there to proclaim that man is sent on earth not to enjoy the earth, but to win his way to heaven. It is his aim to carry out literally the teaching of the Gospel. The Scripture exhorts us to give alms to the poor. The Pope provides an enormous number of poor to whom the precept is to be applied, and a few rich by whom it is to be applied. The Scripture tells us that faith is the great requisite. The Pope sets it above all other virtues, and a departure from it above all other crimes. Burglary or murder he can pardon, but for unorthodoxy he has no tolerance. The Scripture seems at once to encourage soldiers and to forbid fighting. The Pope maintains a standing army that is never allowed to make war. The Scripture recognises dignities, and urges men to be content. The Pope has an entourage of cardinals and princes, and takes every precaution lest the lower ranks should better their condition. The Papal States are, in fact, a kind of crystallized parody of Christianity, in which, if the spirit is gone, the words are faithfully preserved. M. About, like most liberal Catholics, gets rid of the close connexion between the ecclesiastical government and the Catholic theory of Christianity, by practically ignoring that Christianity has anything to do with man on earth. He would allow the Pope to establish or invent as many spiritual dogmas as he might fancy, provided that there was no interference with the construction of railways and telegraphs. But this is not the way in which men talk who think that Christianity must show itself in all the affairs of life. We Protestants have cut the knot. We say that man was placed on earth to subdue it, and to arrive at as much happiness as the scheme of divine government will permit, and that we must accommodate the language of Christianity to this conception. We hope that we are true to the spirit of the New Testament, when we interpret it by the exigencies of man's temporal interests. But Catholics can scarcely do so without giving up the essentials of Catholicism. We do not, therefore, think that M. About's demonstration of the extreme badness of the Pope's temporal government, if judged of by the test of worldly prosperity, shows that it is also bad if estimated by the standard of that union of Christianity with human life which devout Catholics hold to be the true one.

It must be acknowledged that the ecclesiastical authorities will not boldly rest their defence on the ground that they are under no obligation to govern in the way which M. About would pronounce right and just. They try to blind the world with the most stupid denials of the most indisputable facts. M. About relates that he and several of his countrymen, whose names he gives, travelled on board a steamer with a French priest, who challenged M. About to state a single fact that told against the Pontifical Government. M. About adduced the required instance, and the priest at once asserted that it was a gross calumny, fabricated by unbelievers to dishonour the Church. The case was that of the boy Mortara. M. About has therefore done something towards clearing the ground of discussion by making the degree and manner of misgovernment henceforth known to all the world. And he has already had the pleasure of feeling that he has made himself exceedingly disagreeable to the Court of Rome. Originally the matter of this volume was published in the *Moniteur*; but the Papal Government procured an order suspending the publication, and even now it has been thought necessary to have the book published in Brussels. Perhaps, on second thoughts, the clergy may be inclined to acquiesce more patiently in its publication. They may ask themselves what harm it does that the Pope should be shown to be a sovereign who makes his subjects childishly ignorant and miserably poor. Catholicism has stood a hundred exposures much worse than this.

M. About paints in detail the characteristics of the different

classes of Romans. The nobles are described as generally resembling the lover in Tolla—weak, vain, half-pious dolls. On the Mediterranean side there is scarcely any middle class, and all the lay professions are steadily discouraged. Anatomy is too indelicate a study for young physicians, and they have therefore to guess at the diseases of women. There is no public to buy the works of artists. A young advocate was recently punished for defending too well a nobleman prosecuted by the Government. There is, therefore, no opening for professional talent, and the system of cultivation arising from almost all the land being held in mortmain prevents the accumulation of wealth. The plebeians are looked on with admiration, mixed with contempt, by M. About. He admires their physical strength, their patience, the ingenuity with which they make their wives useful for every purpose, but he despises their absurd interest in saints and saints' days. He was, however, cheered by finding that his favourites on the Ancona side were fast abandoning pilgrimages as a waste of time. All this took some time to find out, and M. About very properly objects to the rapid conclusions which strangers who do Rome in a week come to in favour of the Government. As M. About remarks, it could hardly be expected that if a prelate wished to commit a crime he would choose the Sistine Chapel as the theatre of his exploit. Strangers see good order, and cheerfulness, and comfort in the region traversed by ordinary sight-seers, and they go home and state that the Romans are the most contented and happy of peoples. A lively sketch follows of the present Pope, whose character is "made up of devotion, good nature, vanity, weakness, and obstinacy, with a spice of rancorousness which peeps out every now and then. He blesses with unction, and pardons with difficulty; he is a good priest and an incompetent sovereign." Antonelli is sketched in much blacker colours, and the detestation which he feels for the Cardinal raises M. About to a higher pitch of eloquence here than elsewhere. Antonelli's fear of death, he says, his passion for money, his love for his family, his contempt for men, his indifference to the happiness of the people, and many other points of accidental resemblance, have suggested a comparison between him and Mazarin. They were born almost in the same mountains. The one insinuated himself by stealth into the heart of a woman, the other into the mind of an old man. Both governed without scruple, and merited the hatred of their contemporaries. Both spoke French in a way equally comical, although acquainted with all the subtleties of the language. But Mazarin dictated treaties to Europe, whereas Antonelli has done nothing but make his own fortune at the expense of the nation, the Pope, and the Church. Of the feeble injustice of the Government in temporal matters, and its severity in matters of faith, M. About has many amusing instances to quote. But they are nothing unless told in his own words. And this is still more true of the latter portion of the book, where the finances of the State and the method of cultivating the soil are discussed. To give merely the results of these chapters would be simply to heap together barren statistics. In order to be appreciated, M. About's book must be read.

#### COLLETTA'S HISTORY OF NAPLES.\*

THE history of the city and territory of Naples presents some very remarkable features, both in ancient and in modern times. In the former, amid the convulsions of Southern Italy under its Greek tyrants or turbulent democracies, and afterwards under its Roman governors, Naples was comparatively exempt from the evils of war or civil broils. The strength of its fortifications repelled alike Pyrrhus and Hannibal. In the civil wars of Rome it was drawn for a while into the vortex; but it speedily recovered from the ravages of the aristocratical party, and during the first two or three centuries of the Empire, attracted by its baths, theatres, and delightful climate and scenery, the wealthiest of the Roman nobles, and occasionally even the Cæsars themselves. Thither resorted the invalid Augustus for health, and the profligate Nero for the unrestrained enjoyment of the amphitheatre and the opera. But when the Empire itself fell into confusion, the destinies of Naples also became turbid and severe. No Italian city passed through fiercer or more rapid vicissitudes of fortune. On the side of the sea she was exposed to Greek and Vandal pirates; on the land side she was plundered by the Visigoths and Lombards, and occupied by the Normans; nor could the feeble Exarch of Ravenna, her ostensible Sovereign, afford her protection. At the beginning of the fifteenth century the French were her masters, but were speedily supplanted by the Spaniards. Her territory was coveted by successive Popes, who laid her Kings under their ban, and fomented rebellion among the people. The city itself was harassed by such demagogues as Massaniello; and the unfortunate citizens must have often repeated with a sigh the designation of Naples by the Augustan poets—*In otia nata Parthenope*. The result of so many wars and such frequent revolutions was the establishment of a Bourbon on the throne; and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies has reaped a full harvest of the grievances which that fatal and fated race has always inflicted upon its subjects. It is scarcely necessary to say that recent events, and the presence in England of the victims of Bourbon tyranny, lend peculiar interest to the volumes which we are now to notice. In their pages is clearly and succinctly traced the

\* *History of the Kingdom of Naples, 1734-1825.* By General Pietro Colletta. Translated from the Italian by S. Horner. With a Supplementary Chapter, 1825-1836. 2 vols. Edinburgh: Constable and Co. 1839.



downward path of despotism from that stage where absolute power is tolerable, because it is exercised with some care for the public weal, to the period where the yoke becomes intolerable, because, weak at the centre and corrupt throughout the circumference, despotism exists for the selfish and sordid end alone of shielding and fattening a monarch *sans foi et sans loi*.

The historian whose narrative is so seasonably translated by Miss Horner deserves some mention on his own account. He fought and suffered for liberty. He was "in prison often." He narrowly escaped the scaffold. He experienced equally the perfidy and ingratitude of the Bourbons, and the rigour of the House of Hapsburg towards all who dream of Italian freedom, or even of ruling Italy by the hands of her own sons. Under the French sovereigns of Naples, Joseph Bonaparte and Joachim Murat, it fared well with Colletta. They discerned, employed, and rewarded his military, civil, and scientific abilities, even though he had borne arms against France. In Murat's favour he stood high, being appointed by him successively *Intendente*, or civil Governor of Calabria Ultra—superintendent, with the rank of general, of roads and bridges—commander-in-chief of the military engineers—and, finally, Councillor of State. He followed his patron through the disastrous campaign of 1815, and was employed by him to negotiate the Treaty of Casalanza. The fortunes of Colletta did not immediately decline on Murat's death. Although some cloud of suspicion adhered to him as a *Muratist*, the restored King Ferdinand confirmed his rank, and appointed him to the command of a division at Salerno. The Minister Medici courted his friendship, but refused to believe Colletta's warning that another revolution was impending over Naples, and their intimacy in consequence cooled down. In 1820, Colletta's prediction was confirmed. Naples was again revolutionized, and the Constitution which had been promised in 1816, was demanded. At this crisis, Colletta proved himself a good subject, but an indifferent citizen. King Ferdinand, having heard of his services, and knowing that he might be relied upon, replaced him in the command of the engineers, and soon afterwards sent him to repress the revolt in Sicily. There, by his own admission, Colletta showed himself merciless to the insurgent party. Perhaps he considered obedience as a soldier's only duty—perhaps he may have thought even despotism preferable to anarchy. So long as the King was in trouble, Colletta prospered. In February, 1821, he succeeded Parisi as Minister of War; but when, in the following month, Ferdinand was restored by Austrian bayonets, his civil and military career came to an end. He was among the first victims marked out for royal vengeance. During three months, he was a prisoner in the dungeons of St. Elmo, and then, without any form of trial, he was hurried off, with other illustrious Neapolitans, to Trieste, and finally conveyed to Brünn, in Moravia. Any particular *liberalism* in his opinions cannot have been the cause, or even the pretext, of Colletta's arrest and imprisonment "at the foot of that Spielberg which has been made a living tomb for so many Italian patriots." Both in the field and in the Cabinet he had served his King faithfully; but superior abilities, no less than benefits that cannot be returned, are as odious to despots as overt opposition to their will, and Colletta was imagined to be a dangerous man, because he had shown himself to be an able one.

In his dreary exile in Moravia, where the climate undermined his health, and unceasing yearnings for home aggravated his sufferings, Colletta conceived the idea of the history now presented to us in an English dress. To the execution of the work he brought long experience in public affairs, and an unusual amount of literary and scientific acquirements. In his youth he had displayed a strong predilection for mathematical pursuits; but, at the same time, he applied himself diligently to the study of Latin, for the sole purpose, it is said, of reading Tacitus in the original. The prince of Roman historians was his model in narrative, and though the Italian tongue does not admit in any hands but those of Macchiavelli of the pregnant brevity of the Latin, the stamp of his early reading is conspicuous in Colletta's style. The work which had been planned and commenced at Brünn was executed at Florence, where, after two years of suffering in Moravia, he was allowed to reside. In the Tuscan capital he had the command of libraries, and enjoyed the society of a few intimate and learned friends. But the gloom and privations of his Austrian prison-house had shattered his constitution; and his release from exile, disease, and ineffectual longings for his native air, came to him, not unwelcome, in November, 1831.

The period of time embraced in these volumes extends from 1734 to 1856. Colletta's narrative indeed closes with the year 1825, but the translator has appended to it a supplementary chapter containing the events of twenty-one years. The original work may be divided into three principal epochs. I. Naples before the French Revolution of 1789. II. The period during which the Bourbon sovereigns were exiles, and Republican or Imperial France indirectly or directly held the reins of government. III. The period of the Restoration, during which Naples has probably displayed to Europe at large, even more signally than Spain herself, that it is in the power of man almost to defeat the purposes and neutralize the blessings of Heaven. In the century described by Colletta, one only of the Bourbons was a respectable sovereign. Considering the stock, indeed, from which he sprang, Charles of Bourbon, eldest son of Elizabeth Farnese and Philip V. of Spain, may be accounted "a patriot king."

By comparison "this was a Caesar! when came there such another?"

Naples in the eighteenth century would have been the best-ordered State in Europe if abundance of laws and variety of codes were identical with the welfare or the freedom of a nation. No less than eleven legislative systems perplexed the courts and defeated the ends of justice, since every race which had occupied southern Italy, from the Greek to the Spaniard, bequeathed to its subjects a code of laws. Nor had the Church been less liberal than the civil power; and the ecclesiastical courts yet farther embroiled the inconsistencies of the secular tribunals. Under such a system it was nearly impossible either to protect the innocent or to convict the guilty without committing a breach of law. The financial system was no better than the legal. Means of social improvement there were none: the money that might have been expended upon roads, bridges, and national defences, was squandered upon churches, convents, theatres, and royal palaces. In all the kingdom there was only one high road—that which led from Naples to Rome. Italy is generally deficient in spacious and secure harbours, but from this defect the Kingdom of the Sicilies is comparatively exempt; yet the Spanish viceroys permitted even the superb bay of their capital to be encumbered with rubbish, while the sea or the land encroached without restraint upon other less favoured ports. Commerce fled from a coast where every article of export or import was heavily taxed; the tiller of the ground was forced to consume his own harvest, since the market dues were ruinous; the rivers overflowed their beds; the forest had begun to encroach again on the cultivated soil at the moment when it suited the policy of Spain to restore the extinct or rather dormant royalty of her Neapolitan possessions.

Charles of Bourbon generally meant and sometimes acted well; nor can his errors be ascribed to any more probable cause than his education by priests, and the evil counsellors of his riper years. He had many social evils to contend with. His Ministers and himself were alike ignorant of the very alphabet of political economy. On the one hand, he had to resist unreasonable complaints—on the other, unreasoning conservatism; and since the former came from the masses, and the latter from the princes of the Church and State, it is less surprising that the poor perplexed King should have amended so little than that he should really have improved so much as he did in the civil and social condition of his realm. It was an evil day for the Neapolitans on which Charles of Bourbon sailed for Spain; for during his reign over them he had done something to correct the uncertainty of the law, something to develop the resources of his kingdom, much to improve its finances, and much also to deserve the confidence and even the love of his people.

The reign of Ferdinand IV. resembles one of those disastrous periods which render Byzantine history so tedious and deplorable a chapter in the annals of mankind. It was of unusual length, extending over a period of sixty-six years. Its beginning and its end were severed by the intrusion of two French monarchs; and when, in his seventy-fifth year, the King rested with his predecessors, his realm had become little better than an Austrian viceroyalty. The long interim between his accession and his death was marked by the vicissitudes of open violence and inward decay. The King was a brutal sportsman—unwilling, perhaps unable, to imbibe the least tincture of learning, and the passive victim of a profligate Queen, of corrupt Ministers, and ambitious or avaricious priests. At first, indeed, the nobles of the realm succeeded in curbing the power and curtailing the revenues of the Church, but the people gained nothing by the substitution of secular for spiritual tyranny. In what may be termed the second reign of Ferdinand—i.e. in the period which followed the final expulsion of the French from Naples—the Church regained its influence, and established its authority more firmly than ever at a Court which revolution had rendered timid, and over a monarch whose heart adversity had hardened, and the profligacy of years had made at once callous and servile. We willingly refer our readers to this portion of Colletta's narrative. The names alone of Maria Caroline and of her favourite Acton, will bring to remembrance those dark pages in Neapolitan history on which are recorded the rapid decline and the unutterable indignities of the realm they were permitted to enfeeble, oppress, and abuse. While narrating them, Colletta may well have conceived that the pencil of Tacitus alone was fitted to describe a period which rivalled the darkest moments of Roman imperial government.

The French government in Naples merits much commendation. The conquerors retrenched the exorbitant privileges and possessions of the Church, introduced into the labyrinth of native legislation the simplicity of the Code Napoleon, prevented, by the abolition of monasteries, the manhood of the nation from becoming drones or impostors, and cherished the martial spirit of the Neapolitans by an effective military system. But this good was not unalloyed with evil. The French stood in the position and claimed all the privileges of conquerors; they absorbed the principal offices of the army and the civil government; the Court, especially that of King Joachim, was splendid in its ceremonies and profuse in its expenditure; and the treasure of Naples was exhausted by these idle ceremonies, and by its enforced contributions to the charges of Napoleon's campaigns beyond the Alps. Still a vigour long unknown to them was infused into the Neapolitan people; and had Murat transferred his crown

to heirs enjoying the blessings of peace, his realm would have benefited by the permanent exclusion of the Bourbons, and the superior energy and intelligence of its Gaulish masters. When Napoleon's sun was setting, King Joachim essayed to win golden opinions of his adopted subjects by lightening their burdens, and by admitting born Neapolitans to conspicuous posts in the state and the army. But the *beau sabreur* was not the man to regenerate a kingdom; even the return of the Bourbons seemed preferable to the uncertainties of a monarch who at one time fawned on the allied sovereigns, and at another renewed his old relations with his brother-in-law, the author of his fortunes. To Naples, as to France and Spain, the Bourbons returned, weak, faithless, and cruel as ever, having learnt nothing, having forgotten nothing during their long exile; and again prepared to act the part of despots, and to be the tool of the priests, whenever it was possible or convenient to throw off the mask of dissimulation.

There is a feature common to all Italian historians from the elder Villani to Colletta. It is the personal animosity with which they deal with contemporary characters and events. The most interesting and the least instructive chapters in the volumes are those which treat of Naples subsequently to 1815. Here is visible the spirit which inspired Dante when he sent to some one or another of the circles in *Inferno* the conspicuous men of his time—the spirit which in a milder degree actuated Petrarch in his letters—the spirit which dipped in gall the pen of Guicciardini, of Bentivoglio, and more lately of Carlo Botta. Colletta comes behind none of these classical writers in his likes and dislikes. When he indulges in the latter, he rises into eloquence; when he expresses his approbation, his style is of that middle kind which Quintilian approves for history, but which is often apt to appear tedious to the reader. These differences of manner are indeed less apparent in the translation than in the original. The translation will give the reader an adequate notion of the subject-matter of Colletta; but it is occasionally defective in spirit when the author writes in his angry mood. We had intended to note some oversights in the English, such as retaining the Italian form *Orazio* in place of the more familiar Latin *Horatius*; and some passages where, as Dangle says in the *Critic*, the interpreter is the harder to understand of the two. Miss Horner has, however, on the whole, executed her task ably and faithfully, and we are not disposed to be extreme in marking the few passages which are done amiss. The supplementary chapter which she has appended to Colletta's work, will enable the general reader to understand the condition of Naples at the present hour; and if it be true that the darkest hour in the political night of a nation be that which just precedes the dawn of a better day, her description may encourage a hope that, even for the beautiful capital of southern Italy, "the night is far spent, and the day at hand."

#### DOMESTIC ANNALS OF SCOTLAND.\*

THE strong reaction which has taken place in modern times against all the drier forms of study is nowhere so strongly marked as in history. To get beyond the annals of wars and treaties, and to show our ancestors as they really were, is the dream of almost every one who in these days studies such records of their doings as remain to us. We have often pointed out the inconveniences which attend such undertakings, the most important of which is their tendency to substitute a more or less complete romance for a vague notion of the truth, correct as far as it goes. There can, however, be no doubt that there is much truth in the commonplace objection to ordinary history—that it teaches us little or nothing worth knowing of the subjects to which it relates. It gives, indeed, an outline of events which is highly convenient to those who propose to carry their investigations further; but it gives hardly anything else; and the very first result of any study that goes the least beyond or below the narrow limits which well-known text-books prescribe, is to give the inquirer a feeling which approaches more nearly to helpless scepticism than to anything more satisfactory. The facts necessary to be known, in order to form an opinion of the state of society at a particular time, are so inconceivably numerous, and the difficulty of obtaining authentic particulars about them is so incalculably great, that the few points on which reliable information still remains serve principally to make darkness visible. The feeling gradually prevails that the actual life of past centuries is almost as much lost as if it had never existed; and we fall back upon Acts of Parliament, treaties, dates, and antiquities, not because they are the most important things that could be told of an age, but because they contain nearly the only truths that are told of it. There is, however, unquestionably a certain limited amount of knowledge of a less uninteresting character, which may be collected respecting particular transactions by those who have a taste for what may perhaps be called intellectual gold-digging. No one can have explored the original documents connected with any historical period without feeling that, if the customs of the library in which he studied would have allowed of an unlimited use of scissors and paste, he might have cut from those infinitely wearisome volumes which gave him so much trouble, and impressed him with so intolerable a sense of weariness, a sufficient number of interesting and curious anecdotes to communicate a vivid, and probably not an absolutely incorrect, conception of the period to

which they referred to any one who might read them with intelligence, and with sufficient acquaintance with what may be called the official history of the times in question.

Mr. Chambers' two volumes are the result of an operation of this sort, conducted with reference to the condition of Scotland between the Reformation and the Revolution. We hope that the collection may not stop there. The last stage of feudalism in Scotland, the growth of that new order of things which at present exists there, and the enormous changes which the early part of this century has witnessed in every department of social life, are all subjects of the highest interest; and it would be a great achievement if the illustrations of their nature, which at present are scattered over a wide surface of literature of every possible description, could be brought together and presented to the world in a single view. In the meantime, however, we must be thankful for what we have got; and certainly Mr. Chambers' volumes give us a far better conception of what Scotland was during the period which they embrace than the other sources of knowledge with which we are acquainted upon that subject. It is obviously unavoidable that such a book as Mr. Chambers' has written should have at least one defect, which, in a literary point of view, is extremely serious. Isolated characteristic extracts on every sort of subject, from a great variety of books, cannot of course form a consecutive whole, and the effect of reading the book in which they are contained is extremely bewildering. One story succeeds another of much the same interest with a constancy that is rather tiresome; but we do not think that the book is more dull or more disjointed than any such production must necessarily be, if it is to be really authentic. It is the material for forming a judgment that we require in such a book, and not the judgment itself. To supply that is the part of the reader.

Though it is impossible to remember any considerable part of the heterogeneous stories which Mr. Chambers has collected, and though it would not be very interesting to quote specimens of them, they leave on the mind two or three broad impressions, which they illustrate and deepen in a great variety of ways. The most important of these is unquestionably that which relates to the wonderful lawlessness of the Scotch nation. During the reign of Mary, and throughout the early part of the reign of James I., the whole country seems to have been the scene of that sort of ferocious feudal cruelty and private war which, if it ever existed in England at all, existed only as a temporary and abnormal state of things during the most confused and violent reigns of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Many of the stories told by Mr. Chambers of events which took place in Scotland towards the end of the sixteenth century are exactly like the crimes which scandalized the author of the *Saxon Chronicle* in the twelfth. A certain Earl of Cassillis, for example, who was called King of Carriek on account of his local authority, caught an unfortunate neighbour who had had a grant of the lands of a neighbouring abbey, and literally roasted him alive in order to get an advantageous lease of them. The regular mode of keeping a "law day," as it was called, was for the litigants to appear at the head of their respective retainers with the view of overawing the judges; and a system of contracts by which the tenant was bound to back his landlord in every way in all his disputes, legal or illegal, would seem to have been part of the social organization of the country. It is curious to trace, with Mr. Chambers' assistance, the steps by which private war gradually died away into isolated crime; whilst feuds first swelled into civil wars, waged on political grounds, and then sank into riots. During the early part of the period, legal punishments seem to have been constantly put out of the question, either by the rank of the offender or by the locality of the offence. To be declared rebels was the worst that a gang of robbers or murderers had to dread under ordinary circumstances. At times, no doubt, the law was armed with an exceptional energy, and some Special Commissioner would despatch the cases of one hundred and twenty border thieves without giving any considerable trouble to any one except the hangman. The process of the pacification of the country would seem, on the whole, to have been a quicker one than we might have been inclined to expect. When James I. united in himself the sovereignty of the two nations, a step of the highest importance was made towards the attainment of this object; for the superiority of the King of Great Britain over any of his subjects was infinitely better ascertained than the superiority of the King of Scotland over his more prominent vassals; and it is curious and interesting to see that accounts of the domestic occurrences of Scotland confirm the anticipations which we might have formed on wider grounds. Towards the end of his reign, King James congratulated himself on having almost entirely exterminated the private feuds which were universal when he came to the throne.

The vicissitudes of the spiritual power in Scotland form a subject of attention hardly, if at all, less interesting than the growth of the authority of the law. It would seem to have increased as the power of the feudal nobility diminished, culminating about the middle of the seventeenth century in a species of tyranny more searching and more galling than any other which can be imagined. When at its height, the authority of the presbyteries would seem to have extended over every action of life. There was hardly any kind of immorality or levity which might not be made a ground of excommunication; and this was a sentence of which the consequence was nothing less

\* *Domestic Annals of Scotland from the Reformation to the Revolution.* By Robert Chambers. Edinburgh: W. and R. Chambers. 1858.



than the exclusion of the person excommunicated not only from all the charities, but almost from all the rights of life. It is a very remarkable circumstance—and neither Mr. Chambers nor any other writer with whom we are acquainted has given a satisfactory explanation of it—that whilst the Scotch have always been most intensely attached to theological speculation, they have for the most part been almost unanimous in their theological conclusions. It is in England that so immense a variety of religious sects has arisen. In Scotland they have always been mere exotics, and have generally been exotics which have entirely failed to take root. Almost the only subject which has caused theological divisions in the most theological country in Europe has been Church government; and even in respect of Church government, the question has rather been as to the consequences of principles than as to the nature of the principles themselves.

Perhaps the most singular of all illustrations of the vividness of the popular faith and the strangely definite forms with which it enabled those who entertained it to invest the spiritual world, is to be found in the trials for witchcraft which were so frequent throughout the whole of the seventeenth century. What astonishes us in reading them is not so much their cruelty (which, indeed, in the later cases was often softened by many mitigations), as the singular want of curiosity which they show. To set down every strange story which any old woman had to tell to diabolical agency, shows, according to modern views, an unconsciousness of the fact that odd stories are frequently susceptible of explanation, and a determination never to suspend the formation of an opinion upon any subject, which are very strange to those who look at such things with modern eyes. Mr. Chambers explains a large number of the stories of witchcraft as being cases of simple madness, and we think there is great plausibility in his conjecture. The notion of meeting with dead persons, and receiving advice and directions from them is, we believe, one of the commonest of insane delusions. Madness must have been at all times a recognised disease, and it seems strange that it should not have occurred to people that some of its symptoms might at times be manifested alone.

The defect of Mr. Chambers' book appears to us to be, that he sympathizes too little with the times which he illustrates. He takes an especial pleasure in giving anecdotes which show that in those times men gave theological instead of philosophical interpretations to strange incidents, and turned them, generally speaking, into prophetic portents; and the tacit assertion that we live in wiser times is apparent in almost every page of the book. We will not say that the assertion and insinuation are not true. Probably they are; but there are other truths connected with the subject which might, we think, have been more fully appreciated. The absolute amount of knowledge or of refinement which exists in any particular age is of infinitely less importance than the use to which it is put. As the life is more than the raiment, the men who act are more than the things with which they act; and there certainly is a vigour and grandeur about many of the characters of whom Mr. Chambers writes which may be matched, but is not often exceeded, in the present day. Modesty is as much a duty in speaking of periods as of individuals; and a book which leads us to think that the writer is always complimenting his own age at the expense of preceding ages, produces an effect not unlike the conversation of a man who, without exactly boasting, is always telling stories to his own advantage. In the main, however, the book is extremely interesting; and we hope it may be continued.

#### HISTOIRE DE MADAME DE MAINTENON.\*

SOME of the French memoir-writers of the eighteenth century complained that the House of Noailles was illiberal in refusing to communicate documents or details concerning Madame de Maintenon. It will be conceded by all who read the voluminous history of her and her times now in course of publication, that the present head of that illustrious house has amply redeemed whatever obligation his ancestors implicitly contracted to make use of any material they may have withheld from her earlier biographers. The most affectionate piety of collateral relationship could hardly carry further the dutiful labour of erecting a substantial monument in honour of a great-grand-aunt's memory. Viewed in reference to Madame de Maintenon alone, this history is, so to speak, an expansion of the celebrated epitaph drafted for her tomb at St. Cyr by the eminent Abbé de Vertot, and settled by the Maréchal de Noailles. "Cette femme forte que le sage chercha vainement dans son siècle, et qu'il nous eût proposée pour modèle, s'il eût vécu dans le nôtre"—is here set forth in details of circumstance and character as carefully proved as if they had been heard of for the first time. It will no longer be necessary to become familiar with the amusing but questionable chronicles and desultory memoirs of the age of Louis XIV. in order to acquire a vivid and consistent idea of the qualities of the most remarkable woman whom the Great King ever delighted to honour. Whatever has been said of her by panegyrist or detractor, from Voltaire and St. Simon to Girardin and other critical essayists of our own days, is conscientiously recited or referred to, approved or confuted, by the family historian. Readers who are content to take even the slightest pains in the historical

analysis of personal character have no excuse left for attaching to the familiar name the attributes of a mere lay figure of impersonal morality. The Duc de Noailles almost forces his audience to answer for themselves the questions which the variety of tone adopted in regard to her by those nearer her own times have compelled him to raise. Was she Pallas Athénê in a hoop—*la raison même*—the goddess of pure beneficent sense; or was she the incarnation of cunning, and calm selfishness, and calculating ambition? Did she systematically play for, and succeed in establishing, an absolute secret tyranny over Louis himself, his Ministers, and his people? Was it her influence that mainly instigated the revocation of the Edict of Nantes? Was the whole of her outer life and the whole of her inner being an organized hypocrisy? Was she slyly vindictive and pertinaciously malicious? Was the character for truth, sweetness, and modesty of disposition recorded on her monument as one *qui ne se démentit jamais* a gigantic imposition? Such are the doubts which the Duc de Noailles has conceived it his duty to dispel for ever. As they mostly arise from broad assertions or insinuations contained in the Memoirs of St. Simon, it is necessary to sacrifice all feelings of absolute trust in the unbiassed accuracy of that most interesting of memoir writers upon the altar of Madame de Maintenon's irreproachable memory. The cleverest and most vivid of French Court chroniclers is accused of systematically perverting and colouring the facts which relate to the King's domestic consort and counsellor. It is fortunately possible to reconcile a qualified scepticism as to the justice of St. Simon's appreciation of her character with a full sense of his value as a narrator of events actually witnessed by himself. The power of giving a true and lively picture of the visible details of life is entirely unconnected with the faculty of impartially judging their results or their causes, or sifting the reports of other observers. The sound and imperturbable perception of individual character which confers a kind of dramatic impersonality on the genuine historian, is not often a characteristic of the busier and more hurried transcriber of passing scenery and personages, in whose note-books the materials for future history are gathered together. St. Simon, who first appeared among the followers of the Court at the age of seventeen, several years after the marriage of Madame de Maintenon with the Monarch had become a public secret, probably was early inoculated with the common kind of prejudice against a personage of inscrutable demeanour and incomprehensible fortune. It is easy to conceive that a similar sort of antipathy to that felt by his Athenian ostraciser to the name of Aristides the Just may have possessed many of the courtiers who had no opportunity or no capacity of knowing anything of Madame de Maintenon beyond her apparent success and her blamelessly punctilious exterior. With respect to any share in the responsibility of revoking the Edict of Nantes which might have belonged to Madame de Maintenon, St. Simon could at most repeat a traditional insinuation, of which the justice was not within his own knowledge. Proneness to believe in or exaggerate the influence of somebody behind the curtain is a habit of mind not confined to Court circles, or concentrated upon matters of state alone. There are yet to be found individuals to whom it is a greater satisfaction to imagine that Shakspeare employed Lord Bacon to write all his plays for him, or that an unheard-of Captain Thomas Scott was the real author of the Waverley novels, than to allow credit for the requisite intellect to the persons whose right to it is a matter of history. It is often easier to exercise an irresponsible imagination in inventing a gratuitous cause, than it is to disprove its operation. The very position which Madame de Maintenon occupied beside the King afforded presumption enough of her great influence to provoke unlimited assertions and general belief as to the exertion of that influence in any transaction which did not otherwise explain itself to a curious observer. And where the tendency of a particular public act seemed to accord with the patent traits of her character as a devout Catholic, slight or no proof would be thought requisite to turn suspicion into certainty. The Duc de Noailles, arguing from the absolute absence of any real evidence to the contrary, from the peculiar dispositions of Louis and of Madame de Maintenon, as well as from her own statements under circumstances which leave their sincerity beyond question, is probably right in asserting that she neither exerted nor possessed the direct political influence for which she has been held accountable. The genuine, practical, and absorbing interest which she is proved to have found in her favourite institution of St. Cyr, and the general colour of her character and personal creed, are alike repugnant to the theory of her having reproduced an old, or invented a new, type of the *femme politique*—

Elle n'en avait ni le goût, ni l'ambition, ni même la capacité: esprit judicieux, fin, délicat, toujours mesuré, ferme et gracieux, agréable et solide, mais sans entraînement d'ambition, et dans la politique proprement dite, sans hauteur de vue ni vaste horizon. Aussi n'eut-elle aucune initiative dans les grands actes du règne, et l'on peut remarquer le peu de place qu'elle tient dans les événements que nous racontons. Restent, il est vrai, cette influence souterraine et cette toute-puissance secrète dont on l'a accusée, sorte d'action occulte à laquelle il est d'autant plus facile de tout imputer, que sa nature même dispense d'en apporter aucune preuve. Ici la réputation se tire de la connaissance de son caractère et de ses penchants, aussi bien que de l'étude attentive et générale des faits.

Est-ce à dire qu'elle n'exerça aucune influence sur le roi, sur la cour, sur son temps, qu'elle fut indifférente ou insensible aux événements, aux desseins ou à la politique de Louis XIV., autant qu'aux intérêts de l'état? Ce serait également contraire à la vérité.

The influence which she did really exercise over the policy of

\* *Histoire de Madame de Maintenon.* Duc de Noailles.

the King was one of a general, indirect, and regulative order. The mission which she recognised as thrust upon herself by a destiny which commanded her self-devotion was not that of guiding through the hands of a royal puppet the details or the outline of the government of France, but that of educating the self-will and strengthening the nature of the individual upon whom the responsibility of that government rested. It was to this task that, with the quiet enthusiasm of feminine conscientiousness, she felt herself called, and resolved at all costs to be faithful. It is difficult to believe that either in the commencement of her connexion with the royal circle as the governess of Madame de Montespan's children, or at any period during the development of that intimacy which resulted in her domestic union with Louis, she did anything to force or to lead circumstances towards the fulfilment of an ambitious desire, or was fully conscious of the direction of the path along which they were leading her. She was not always free from a tendency to the morbid excess of scrupulousness and self-distrust sometimes found in earnest high-principled women under the training of a spiritual director. The tone of Fénelon's letters to her may be taken as strong proof that she was habitually too backward in exerting an active religious influence over the king to satisfy the proselytizing requirements of a zealous churchman. And from her own letters it is obvious that the habitual striving after perfect self-command which marked her own conduct through life, as it was the mainspring of her educational system at St. Cyr, led her to practise extreme caution in following her own impulse to use the force she knew herself to possess.

It is more difficult, therefore, to fix the degree than the kind of moral tutelage actually exercised by her over her royal friend and pupil, as he may really be called. Always at secret variance alike with the ceremonial and the frivolity of the Court from which her position forbade her to escape—conventionally obliged to display lively spirits and brilliancy of humour when sad or serious at heart, to preserve her command over the temperament of a royal mind requiring amusement as the condition of docility—too honest to dissemble easily, too ironical to submit in contented silence to the simple stupidity which formed a large portion of her outward existence—anxious to forget herself in her complex scheme of duty, while keeping the strictest watch over herself by habitual examination of her own conscience, and submissive reference to her chosen pastors—she presents to us a very different aspect of her entire character from that partial view which must have been given to the Court of Louis the Fourteenth, or even to himself. If the ideal sage of all or any time, who is represented in her epitaph as having sought vainly to realize her type among the women of his own day, had survived into the nineteenth century, he might have found among the ladies of England a considerable number of specimens endowed with many of the most characteristic qualities of Madame de Maintenon. Women of cultivated intellect, high aspirations, and untiring energy, zealous to teach everybody who will be taught, whether in parish-schools or private circles—formed, as the phrase is, for the highest success and enjoyment in society, and yet capable of sacrificing themselves with a life-long devotion to a single object, and sometimes to a false position—staunch to the carrying out of every detail of the principle they have once adopted—rather prone to be led by their native reverence for whatever is or seems authoritatively good and right into an excessive reliance upon mental directors not much wiser than themselves—in short, given to working out with all their energies whatever theory of universal or particular amelioration in doctrine or discipline, Evangelicism, Christian socialism, or other *ism* it may have been their destiny to assimilate—are by no means rare among us now. Happily for most of them, they have in general the opportunity of gratifying their unexceptionably benevolent inclinations at the expense of less notoriety than was bound up with the lot of Madame de Maintenon. Their type will be perpetuated at most in a serious two-volume novel. It will neither be invariably *denigré* by a St. Simon, nor canonized by the worship of a Duc de Noailles.

Even St. Simon has a good word to say for the gracefulness of Madame de Maintenon's talent of raillery. "Elle excellait dans ces demi-mots de ridicule bien menés." Her familiar correspondence is full of touches in this vein. Here is a pretty instance of serious and suggestive irony, lightly hitting off the childishness of Court interest and gossip, in a letter to Cardinal de Noailles. The date of the letter (28th May, 1696), is not uninteresting, as marking the epoch when a now universal vegetable first appeared as a fashionable luxury:—

Il y a huit jours que j'y suis sans relâche (à la cour qui était à Marly): il y en a presque autant, que je succombe à la tristesse de n'entendre rien dire de raisonnable; le chapitre des pois dure toujours, l'impatience d'en manger, le plaisir d'en avoir mangé, et la joie d'en manger encore, sont les quatre points que nos princes traitent depuis quatre jours. Il y a des dames qui, après avoir soupe chez le roi, et bien soupe, trouvent des pois chez elles pour en manger avant de se coucher, au risque d'une indigestion; c'est une mode, une fureur, et l'une suit l'autre. Vous avez d'étranges brebis, monseigneur!

The summing up of his heroine's character by the Duc de Noailles is as follows:—"Aimable et pieuse, appartenant à la fois au monde et à Dieu, et sachant très-bien en parler le double langage." As part of his case rests upon the entire separation of the public history of her times from her own, the greater bulk of his pages, treating of the relations of France to the course of European history, is filled with matter bearing no reference to her. Readers of Macaulay will find it not uninteresting to study

the English Revolution from a Catholic and Continental point of view. They will see that the French historian brings out more strongly, if possible, than even the Whig partisan and panegyrist of Dutch William, the fatal incapacity and singular blindness of James.

ELLEN RAYMOND.\*

WE remember to have heard an estimable old lady express her dislike of the works of one of the most popular writers of the age, on the ground that "it is not pleasant to be taken into so much bad company." It was not that the novels in question were replete with rough oaths and coarse language; it was not that they dealt with scenes of vulgar vice; it was not that the author's own moral sense seemed by any means perverted or deficient. His taste and good feeling preserved him alike from vulgarity and false morality; but the society which moved and lived in his pages was wrong and rotten at heart, selfish and unprincipled; and his unexampled power of delineation only made the "company" which he so forcibly depicted more revolting to one whose taste was rather moral than artistic. We confess to feeling something like this with respect to more than one writer of the present day, and more especially in regard to some who studiously avoid all intrusion of anything like coarseness or low life into their volumes, and whose own moral purpose is evidently right and lofty. It is not always agreeable to contemplate a powerful and vivid picture of things naturally painful and revolting, particularly when their hideousness is of a kind to impress forcibly the imagination of the beholder. The fascination of horror is, no doubt, exceedingly strong; but it bears more resemblance to that which the snake exercises over the bird than to any more agreeable sensation. A master-artist might, in a moment of inspiration, paint a picture of the Last Judgment, or portray the torments of the damned in a manner that would leave on the memory of all who saw it an impression never to be forgotten. It might be almost impossible to turn our eyes from the painting when first seen; but we should not care to see it often; and we doubt whether any man of susceptible imagination would like to hang it up in his study. A taste for a prolonged contemplation of the horrible is not very common. Most of us would shrink from it; and more, rather than less, in proportion as the moral element enters into the horrors of the picture. For the same reason that men who would face any physical foe have quailed before the terrors of superstition—for the same reason that a ghost-fancying child dreads a spectre worse than a wild-beast—a powerful portrayal of a "hell within the heart" of human beings may be made to produce a much more painful and vivid impression on the reader's memory than the most frightful and ghastly scenes of the old spectre-smitten school of romance. It is not very terrifying, in an age which studies magnetism and metaphysics, to read of ghosts with clanking chains, skeleton torch-bearers, and headless riders: but even a tale of this kind ought to contain some relief from supernatural horrors—some element more agreeable and less grotesque. The horrors of the moral world are more real and more impressive; and if an author aspires to lead us through scene after scene which seems like a frightful dream of the worst and most violent passions that distract humanity, it is but common charity and common prudence to let us occasionally emerge into the light of a spiritual sunshine—to preserve throughout the story some thread of calm quiet home life, or steady unswerving virtue, to make us feel that there are some at least among all this "bad company" who are worth while knowing—that there is some relief to the black pall of moral ugliness which seems to overhang the whole.

Mrs. Vidal errs in this respect. There are lighter shades and touches in her book, there are glimpses of the sun through the thunder-clouds, but these are indeed "few and far between." The sombreness of the colouring throughout is deeper than in any novel we have seen for a long time past. Now a picture in which black is the prevailing hue is hardly to be conceived as agreeable; and the black in *Ellen Raymond* is lurid and intense—so intense that when, just at the very close, we emerge into daylight, the contrast is too forcible to seem natural or probable. There is a further fault. The horror and the interest of the tale all turn on one idea, repeated over and over again in various forms—marriage, not without love, but against it—marriage made revolting, miserable, horrible, because the accepted suitor of one sister was the lover of another. In three distinct instances is this idea worked out with wonderful force and intensity of purpose, and without repeating in one case the accessories and circumstances of another. Three unhappy homes—unhappy far beyond ordinary experience, and almost beyond ordinary belief—the authoress has thrown open before us; of two perfectly happy ones we are allowed a faint glimpse; but it is in painting domestic misery that her forte appears to lie. So often reproduced, the scene is always new, if not always quite natural. The same perverted and overpowering passion reappears in different natures with the same violence and the same unscrupulousness, but not with the same effects, nor in such manner as to give the idea of sameness. Herein there is at once an improbability in fact and a mistake in art; but it is this re-

\* *Ellen Raymond*; or, *Ups and Downs*. By Mrs. Vidal, Author of "Tales for the Bush," "Cabramatta and Woodleigh Farm," &c. London: Smith, Elder and Co. 1859.

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petition which best serves to bring out the abundant resources and fertile imagination of the writer.

Resource, imagination, power, Mrs. Vidal displays in no common degree. Skill, judgment, and delicacy of touch she rather wants. Her characters are all drawn too strongly—all much more sharply defined and one-sided than is the case in actual life. No living character is confined to one or two qualities, as are so many of those which prevail in fiction. Few successful writers are free from this fault. Their leading personages are almost all too sharply delineated, and too exclusively ruled by the single master-passion, or possessed by the single predominant faculty assigned to them. No woman is really, like Bessie Raymond, devoid of any other quality than that of idolizing submissiveness towards her husband, or so entirely an incarnation of family pride and severe respectability as Miss Mortimer, or so complete a personification of selfish and intriguing passion as her aunt. The same want of complexity is visible in all the masculine characters—which nevertheless, be it said, are better than those of most even of our best female novelists, being all men, and none of them either monsters or demigods, with a single exception, of whom happily we see but little. If, however, there is a want of finish about the characters and the scenes, there is no want of force and vigour. There is more power and strength put forth in *Ellen Raymond* than perhaps in any lady's book of this generation, excepting *Paul Ferroll*. Mrs. Vidal is somewhat too lavish of energy; and the vehemence of passion and expression becomes in some places excessive and almost hysterical. The stormy scenes which she describes are evidently congenial to her taste, and excite an interest which makes it difficult to lay down the book unfinished. In quiet home life, or in social gaiety, she seems less at ease; but her sketches of the loving young couple whom she miscalls Sir Frederic de Lisle and Lady Frederic, and of the quiet old couple in the rectory, are well done, though but slight; and Mrs. Wentworth, Ellen's kindly but somewhat frivolous friend and protectress, is perhaps one of the best drawn, though by no means the most remarkable character in the book.

*Ellen Raymond* consists principally of a series of domestic tragedies of a very painful kind—too improbable to be commended as life-like, and yet sufficiently possible, each by itself, to avoid the *incredulous odii* of the most matter-of-fact reader. But that mother and daughter, aunt and niece, should be the heroines of two successive intrigues of the same kind—and that two brothers should each marry a sister of the lady to whom both were attached, and each make his wife miserable by that attachment—is a complication which exaggerates the improbability further than was altogether prudent, especially as the tragedy of the first generation might have been spared, without at all impairing the interest of the story.

The connexion among the *dramatis personæ* is a somewhat intricate one, and not to be understood at a hasty glance. Before the curtain is drawn up, Colonel Raymond, the son of a West India proprietor, in love with a lady named Duval, has been sent over to England to win the hand of his heiress-cousin, Bertha. He finds her unwell, and spends his time till her recovery with her sister and a young friend, afterwards Mrs. Wentworth. He falls violently in love with the younger sister, Ellen; but he cannot afford to marry her, as Mrs. Vidal does not know that daughters divide the inheritance of their father, primogeniture not obtaining among the fair sex. Unluckily they dispense with the ceremony; and to avoid detection Ellen Raymond the first is married to an Italian, appropriately named Vilani, while her cousin marries Bertha. The secret is ere long discovered. Ellen's child has been spirited away, and she herself dies, as the report is spread, by her own hand, if not by her husband's. Bertha, after a miserable life, dies, leaving four girls with her husband, now resident at Poole, where also is Miss Duval, now the widow of Mr. Hay, brother to Mrs. Mortimer, the lady mother of the principal family in the town. John Mortimer, Mr. Hay's nephew and professional successor, woos Ellen, Colonel Raymond's daughter. Scornfully repulsed by her, he marries her sister Bessie; and, with Mrs. Hay's assistance, revenges himself by spreading reports which destroy Ellen's peace, blast her reputation, and poison her home. Amid their plots the curtain rises. Not satisfied with other injuries, they slander her to her lover, Granville Mortimer, who is driven from her in consequence. She leaves her father's unfatherly care for that of Mrs. Wentworth, her mother's oldest friend, a gay and somewhat reckless, but honest and kind-hearted widow. Even here she is tormented by John Mortimer's passion and persecution, until his debts drive him abroad, where he dies. His death-bed confession brings Granville back to Ellen's feet; but jealousy and intrigues again repel him, and he disappears for a long time. She finds him again after Mrs. Wentworth's death. She has been supporting herself by painting. Her profession has brought her into his neighbourhood, and she is carried with a broken arm into his house. She finds him married to Lily Day, her unknown illegitimate half-sister and protégée. Now comes the most faulty and improbable, but at the same time one of the best-written, portions of the story. Knowing his attachment to her and seeing his alienation from Lily, Ellen yet consents to remain for a long time an inmate of his house, delighting in his society, and more and more winning him away from his somewhat childish but very devoted wife. It is very long before she opens her eyes to the gross wickedness and impropriety of her

conduct; and when she does at last depart in shame and by stealth, Granville pursues and almost persuades her to return. It is hardly possible to believe that any woman not utterly lost to maiden purity and womanly honour could act such a part, nor is it easy to acquiesce in the favourable opinion which the authoress seems to entertain of the man who could so treat the wife he had sworn to honour and cherish.

This is only the main thread of the narrative. There are many scenes and characters, many by-passages of various kinds, of which we have said nothing. Many of them connect themselves in no way with the story, have no bearing on its result, and give the reader an impression that the work has been hastily finished, leaving these broken threads, which were meant to rejoin it at some point or other, hanging loose and disjointed. Such is the mystery surrounding the appearances of Vilani, who interferes with the daughter's fate as with the mother's, without having any visible object or producing any result. There are too many characters introduced where they are not wanted, either to affect the story or to influence the disposition of the heroine. They appear and vanish. We hear a good deal of them for a few chapters, and then they disappear from the stage; while the necessity of giving, at least in outline, an individual being to each adds materially to the labour of the authoress.

Mrs. Vidal excels rather in the portrayal of passions than in the delineation of characters. The fierce and uncontrolled bursts of the former, which occur frequently in the course of the story that we have traced, are given with disagreeable fidelity; but the characters and dispositions of the principal actors are by no means always natural and consistent. Most, if not all, of them are certainly "bad company" in the moral sense of the word—without steady principle of any kind to control them, with unbridled passions, and with no disposition to curb their impulses from a sense either of justice or of duty. Granville and John Mortimer are both made to appear selfish, violent, and unscrupulous, though the authoress seems to have intended the former as, upon the whole, a favourable specimen of his sex. The latter is a domestic tyrant, a man without a spark of noble or generous feeling, apparently a forger, and certainly quite capable of being one. Such a man could hardly have preserved to the last the regard and esteem of his family and acquaintance as John Mortimer is represented to have done, and certainly would have found none to defend his honour even against his own deathbed confession. Mrs. Mortimer, quiet, gentle, and subdued by her reverence for the Mortimer character and will into something more than deference towards her own children, is a fantastic but not unnatural little sketch. Mrs. Wentworth, as a lady with more heart than judgment, good-natured, and yet in some things almost selfish, and more virtuous than discreet, is life-like and agreeable. Bessie, John's unhappy wife, is womanly, but with more weakness than is generally found apart from imbecility. Mr. Vaughan, who plays no prominent part in the story except as Ellen's lover, is a good specimen of a somewhat soft-minded middle-aged gentleman; but hardly silly enough, we should have thought, to pass over that young lady's strange conduct with Granville Mortimer so lightly as he is made to do. Alick Hay is a very natural, lighthearted, lightheaded young man—also of very little use to the story. Colonel Raymond remains to the last a selfish and sensual profligate, and Mrs. Hay a selfish and passionate *intrigante*. Vilani is a regular specimen of the villain of romance, and might have been borrowed from G. P. R. James or Dumas. Some of the minor characters are natural and pleasing sketches. Of the heroine it is not easy to express a decided opinion. Any girl of a naturally good disposition, growing up motherless among such people and under such circumstances, if endowed with a proud spirit, a sharp tongue, a vindictive temper, and an utter want of judgment, might possibly have behaved much as she did. It is difficult to say what any character might become, if so situated from early youth. Of the episode of her residence with her lover and his wife, we have already expressed our opinion.

*Ellen Raymond* is not a book to be recommended to readers of fastidious taste, or invalids of excitable temperament. It would certainly displease the critical judgment of the first, and might somewhat endanger the night's rest of the second. It is powerful, but clumsy, unfinished, and unequal—a work of genius, nevertheless, and one that by greater skill, care, and judgment, and a good deal of the *lima labor*, might have been made a first-rate novel.

#### A GARLAND OF CHRONICLES.\*

ON the western coast of India there is a peculiar district in great measure isolated from the surrounding country. One portion of it is a peninsula, somewhat more than a hundred miles in breadth, lying between the Gulfs of Kutch and Cambay, which approach at their extreme points within fifty miles of each other. About eighty miles inland from the neck of this peninsula, there runs parallel to the general coast line a rugged chain of mountains—from one extremity of which the River Bunas falls into the Gulf of Kutch, and from the other the larger stream of the Nerbudda finds its way into the Gulf of Cambay. The tract between the mountains and

\* *Rās Mālā; or, Hindoo Annals of the Provinces of Guzerat.* By Alexander Kinloch Forbes, of the H.E.I.C.S. London: Richardson.

the rivers is Guzerat Proper, though the name is applied to the whole province, including the peninsula, which rejoices in its own title of Soreth. Mr. Forbes' book is the fruit of a residence of eight years in this district, during the latter part of which he filled the office of political agent of Myhee Kanta, the upland portion of the Guzerat district—a post which was formerly held by Sir James Outram. During this time, Mr. Forbes devoted his leisure to the collection of the numerous Jain and Bardic chronicles with which the province teems, and to the investigation of the customs and traditions of the different classes of natives, and the examination of such records as were to be found among the inscriptions on the temples and tombstones of the old Hindoo inhabitants. Whatever may be the authenticity of the stories he has gathered together from these sources, his *Rās Mālā*, or "Garland of Chronicles," is sufficiently ample; and if the facts may be to some extent imaginary, the traditions are not on that account the less interesting as an illustration of the habits, beliefs, and modes of thought of one section at least of our mysterious Indian subjects.

Mr. Forbes' position as political agent enabled him to get possession of materials for his work which are not generally accessible to English explorers, and he strengthened his hands by retaining the services of a Guzerat Brahmin, one Dulpuram, known as the kuveshwar, or poet. It is to be hoped that Dulpuram did not exercise his poetic faculties by fabricating the voluminous chronicles and songs which Mr. Forbes has given to the world, and that the *Rās Mālā* is of a more genuine character than the poems of Ossian. External evidence we have none. Mr. Forbes is almost silent on the details of his work of collection; and we have to rest our faith in the genuineness of the Chronicles more upon the sagacity of the collector than upon any direct evidence that the legends were not manufactured for the purpose of being palmed off on an Englishman who does not profess to have had any deep Oriental scholarship by which to test the antiquity of the poems so copiously supplied at his demand. But, without being excessively credulous, we think we may assume that we have a real collection of Hindoo chronicles before us. The existence of a race of bards down to the present time necessarily implies a stock in trade of legends and poems embodying the history and traditions of the people; and unless the kuveshwar was endowed with a fertility beyond that of Western poets, it would have been a much harder task to compose the legends which fill a great part of two goodly volumes, than to pick up the real traditions which it was the business of the bards to preserve.

Mr. Forbes' account of this race is rather curious. It quite accords with our notions of the bardic character, that the wandering poet should be the herald of great families and the historian of great achievements. But the bard of Guzerat adds more businesslike aptitudes to his heroic duties. He is, or rather was, not only a poet and itinerant registrar-general, but a sort of sacerdotal notary. No agreement for the settlement of tribute or the arrangement of private disputes was to be relied on without the attesting mark (supposed to represent a dagger) which always denotes a bardic signature. The mode of enforcing the strict observance of these solemn agreements was no doubt effectual. If a bond thus attested was broken, the offender's habitation was surrounded by a cordon of bards, who invoked curses from Heaven, and shut out supplies from earth until the victim yielded to terror or famine. As the person of a bard was held sacred, it was not easy to break through the holy blockade, and one can easily understand that a class armed with such stringent powers of execution would be very serviceable as the witnesses and vindicators of contracts.

The functions of the bard are hereditary, which may have helped to preserve the chain of tradition; but we should nevertheless hesitate to place as much trust in the historical accuracy of the chronicles as Mr. Forbes seems disposed to do. The maxim which he quotes from Miss Strickland, that tradition is on the whole accurate as to fact, though wholly regardless of chronology, must not be strained too far, or it would be hard to account for some of the pseudo-historical nonsense of the Welsh bards, who bring down their history from the time when Priam reigned king of the Cymri in Troy. A couplet translated by Mr. Forbes gives the Indian view of the poet's duty:—

Without fiction there will be a want of flavour,  
But too much fiction is the house of sorrow.

Certainly some of the narratives in the *Rās Mālā* smack of the house of sorrow, and very few are so flavourless as the lawyer-like avocations of the composers, if not relieved by a taste for fiction, might have led one to expect. The *Rās Mālā* was collected just in time, for it seems that the race of bards, who trace their origin from some fabulously remote epoch, is rapidly dropping into oblivion.

But it must not be supposed that the poetic legends of the country are the only basis of Mr. Forbes' narrative. Where genuine history was to be had, he has seized upon it and woven it into his garland. Dusty temples, and still dustier records in the depositories of the India House, were diligently searched to make up a complete account of the historical, as well as the mythical, periods of the story of Guzerat. Mr. Forbes, indeed, does not profess to discuss the subject of ancient India; but in commencing with what he calls the mediæval period, he takes us back as far as the first century of the Christian era. The here-

tical sect of the Jains branched off from orthodox Hindooism at an epoch which, according to their own traditions, was sufficiently remote. Adeenath was the first Teerthunker, or high-priest, of the seceders; and we are left to guess the age in which he lived by the curious information, that until his time no rain fell upon the earth, no fire existed, nor any thorny tree. Adeenath was the Prometheus to whom the world owed these blessings, together with the useful science of government, and the doubtful art of war. Guzerat is honoured by a mountain especially consecrated to Adeenath, at the base of which lies the holy city of Paleetana, remarkable even now for the magnificence of its shrines dedicated to the Jain worship. So sacred is this mountain of Shut-roonjye, that, according to the Jain creed, it is destined to survive the destruction of the world.

Such a spot might be expected to prove a very mine of legends, and Mr. Forbes tells us that those he has selected are only specimens from a vast multitude of traditions which have clustered round the holy mountain, and many of which are recorded in the Muhatma, or sacred chronicle of Shutroonjye. These stories are thoroughly Indian in complexion, but it is remarkable that incidents crop out continually that suggest familiar classical myths. One of the earliest of them relates to the struggle between Buddhism and the Jain faith in the reign of Sheeladitya. The lineage of this monarch was of a brilliant kind. His mother, Soobhuja, the daughter of a Brahmin and a child-widow, was celebrated for her beauty and for the assiduity of her sacrifices in honour of the Sun. The Sun God was tempted by his love for the widowed maiden to assume the form of a mortal, and the result was that poor Soobhuja was turned out of doors by her father in disgrace, and the future King Sheeladitya shortly afterwards appeared in the world. As a boy, he was much distressed at not knowing whom to claim as his father, but at last the Sun God revealed himself to him, and gave him some magic pebbles as sure as the bullets of Der Freyschutz. Sheeladitya was not long before he brought down the King with one of his pebbles and reigned in his stead.

The son of the Sun is described as rather wavering in his religious convictions. To settle his difficulties he held a Court where the Jains and the Buddhists were to discuss their tenets, on the condition that the beaten party was to retire into exile. The Buddhists won the day (a curious admission, this, to be found in a Jain chronicle). But the King had a nephew, Mull, who presented himself, armed with a mysterious book, named Nye Chukra, and demanded a second conference. This time the orthodox triumphed, and Sheeladitya returned to the Jain faith, and promoted Mull to the highest ecclesiastical preferment. This traditional account of Sheeladitya is so far supported by the evidence of inscriptions and the concurrent testimony of some Chinese records, that it seems at any rate to be established that four monarchs of this name, of the race of Kshutrijas, reigned with much power and prosperity in this country at some time between the fifth and eighth centuries. The dynasties that followed that of the Sun—the Chowras and the family of Mool Raj—are chronicled by their respective poets in much the same style as the great Sheeladitya. After this, we approach the confines of the strictly historical period, and the Rajpoot story of the Mahometan raid upon Somnath and Unhilpoor tallies sufficiently well with the narrative of the invaders to show that the poetical traditions are not without some foundation of truth. The glories of Guzerat seem to have culminated in the twelfth century. Ruins of reservoirs, wells, temples, and palaces of the ante-Mahometan period justify the boasts of the native poets, and evidence the fierce destruction which the new invaders brought down upon the land. It was long, however, before the wave of Mahometan conquest finally buried the kingdom of Unhilpoor; and the successors of Bheem Dev, the favourite hero of the chroniclers, maintained the Hindoo rule with varying success, until the complete subjugation of the country in the commencement of the fourteenth century.

The stream of poetic tradition, however, was not dried up by the disasters of the country, and the struggles and petty wars which followed are as copiously illustrated by the bardic traditions as the more glorious reigns of the Rajpoot princes by the old Jain annals. From this period we emerge into that of the Company's rule, under which the Peninsula once more regained a tranquillity which had not been undisturbed for centuries. The great value of such a compilation of native annals and poems as Mr. Forbes has put together, is not the light which they may throw upon the occurrences which have taken place in an outlying province, so much as the illustrations they afford of the manners and customs, the tenures and the religions, of the races from whom the inhabitants of India are derived. The information which he has obtained in matters of this kind is what renders the *Rās Mālā* not merely an interesting curiosity, but a work worthy of the vast labour which has evidently been devoted to it.

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I have been importuned to allow a publication of the names of these defaulters, but I have no wish to gratify idle curiosity, or inflict personal annoyance; and I cannot perceive any public benefit likely to accrue from this invidious disclosure.

You are well aware that in consenting to be put in nomination, at the instance of a large body of independent and respectable electors, my principal motive was to give to a populous metropolitan constituency, the power and opportunity of exercising the electoral franchise free from the corrupting influences inevitably consequent upon the usual enormous expenditure required from candidates; and, had a majority been able to resist such inducements and allurements during the last two days of the election, an example would have been presented of some importance in advancing the progress of real Parliamentary Reform.

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